

(12) **United States Patent**
Scarleski

(10) **Patent No.:** **US 9,814,324 B2**
(45) **Date of Patent:** **Nov. 14, 2017**

- (54) **PASSIVE MATTRESS ENCASEMENT**
- (71) Applicant: **Levitation Sciences LLC**, Chicago, IL (US)
- (72) Inventor: **William John Scarleski**, Chicago, IL (US)
- (73) Assignee: **LEVITATION SCIENCES LLC**, Chicago, IL (US)
- (*) Notice: Subject to any disclaimer, the term of this patent is extended or adjusted under 35 U.S.C. 154(b) by 359 days.

- 3,027,573 A * 4/1962 Bell, Jr. A47C 27/22
5/500
- 3,261,177 A 7/1966 Amann et al.
- 3,266,066 A * 8/1966 Bereday A47C 31/023
297/452.1
- 3,287,749 A * 11/1966 Marsico A47C 27/05
5/716
- 3,416,626 A 12/1968 Nagamatsu
(Continued)

FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS

- EP 1 106 115 6/2001
EP 1 645 258 4/2006
(Continued)

- (21) Appl. No.: **14/046,113**
- (22) Filed: **Oct. 4, 2013**

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

- U.S. Appl. No. 13/838,408, William Scarleski.
(Continued)

(65) **Prior Publication Data**

US 2015/0096121 A1 Apr. 9, 2015

Primary Examiner — Robert G Santos

- (51) **Int. Cl.**
A47C 31/10 (2006.01)
A47G 9/02 (2006.01)
A47C 21/02 (2006.01)

(74) *Attorney, Agent, or Firm* — John S. Paniaguas; Clark Hill PLC

- (52) **U.S. Cl.**
CPC *A47C 31/105* (2013.01); *A47C 21/028* (2013.01); *A47G 9/0238* (2013.01); *Y10T 29/49817* (2015.01)

(57) **ABSTRACT**

A passive mattress encasement is formed to encapsulate a mattress and includes a top panel, a bottom panel and multiple side panels. One or more of the side panels are zippered together. The un-zippered side panels fixedly connect the top panel to the bottom panel. The underside of the top panel and optionally the inside of the side panels may be coated with a waterproof coating to form a waterproof membrane. The encasement is configured to facilitate rotation of the mattress. Optional straps may be provided, fixedly attached to the encasement. The straps allow the encasement to be snugged against the mattress to enable the encasement to be used with a relatively wide range of mattress sizes and still provide a snug fit.

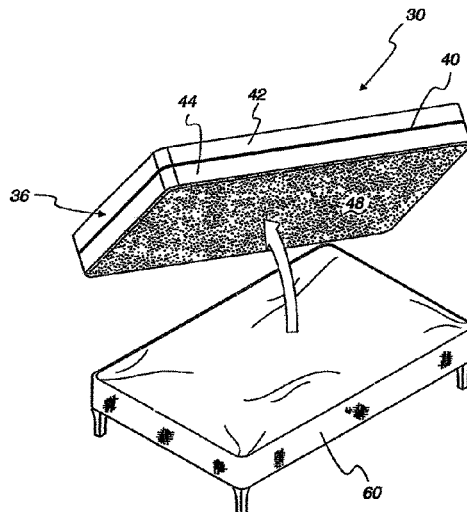
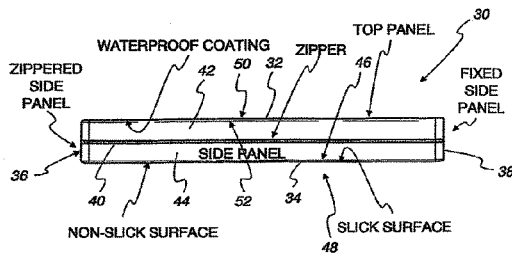
- (58) **Field of Classification Search**
CPC A47G 9/00; A47G 9/02; A47G 9/0238; A47G 9/0246; A47C 31/105
USPC ... 5/482, 484, 496–500, 502, 737, 738, 925, 5/926
See application file for complete search history.

(56) **References Cited**

U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

- 2,400,731 A 5/1946 Armstrong
2,849,729 A 9/1958 Goodey, Jr. et al.

6 Claims, 25 Drawing Sheets



(56)	References Cited		8,959,675 B2 *	2/2015	Scarleski	A47C 21/00
	U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS		9,021,630 B2 *	5/2015	Scarleski	A47C 21/00
						5/482
3,581,322 A *	6/1971 Marsico	A47C 27/05	9,596,946 B2 *	3/2017	Scarleski	A47C 31/105
		5/699	2003/0029062 A1	2/2003	Esterman	
RE27,336 E *	4/1972 Bereday	A47C 31/026	2003/0079292 A1	5/2003	Ellis et al.	
		297/452.6	2003/0106157 A1 *	6/2003	Rugset	A47C 31/10
3,667,073 A	6/1972 Renfroe					5/738
3,950,800 A *	4/1976 Garshfield	A47C 27/04	2004/0133978 A1	7/2004	Fairchild	
		5/721	2004/0172763 A1 *	9/2004	Sachs	A47C 7/021
4,046,317 A	9/1977 Hein, Jr.					5/656
4,095,299 A	6/1978 Schwiso		2004/0226089 A1	11/2004	Miranda	
4,155,421 A	5/1979 Johnson et al.		2005/0005358 A1 *	1/2005	DuDonis	A47C 20/027
4,164,797 A	8/1979 Golembeck					5/632
4,319,781 A *	3/1982 Tsuge	B62J 1/18	2005/0172412 A1	8/2005	Pearson	
		150/167	2005/0229318 A1	10/2005	Peng	
4,437,704 A *	3/1984 Hovsepian	A47C 4/02	2006/0010608 A1	1/2006	DeFranks et al.	
		297/440.14	2007/0022533 A1	2/2007	Borino	
4,517,690 A	5/1985 Wegener		2007/0251017 A1	11/2007	Speer et al.	
4,706,313 A *	11/1987 Murphy	A47C 27/148	2008/0028522 A1	2/2008	Atwood	
		5/722	2008/0040858 A1	2/2008	Sakaldasis	
4,944,053 A	7/1990 Smith		2008/0096001 A1	4/2008	Emden et al.	
5,022,110 A	6/1991 Stroh		2008/0141463 A1	6/2008	Dionne	
5,065,485 A *	11/1991 Zocco	A47C 31/105	2008/0264983 A1	10/2008	Kastan	
		29/525.03	2008/0301876 A1	12/2008	Kenalty et al.	
5,088,952 A	2/1992 Goldblatt		2009/0004452 A1	1/2009	Assink	
5,168,589 A	12/1992 Stroh et al.		2009/0056030 A1	3/2009	Bolden	
5,257,430 A	11/1993 Yamaguchi		2009/0083909 A1	4/2009	Amsler	
5,313,679 A	5/1994 Yamaguchi		2009/0106893 A1	4/2009	Blevins	
5,318,481 A	6/1994 St-Germain		2010/0258344 A1	10/2010	Creasy	
5,360,363 A	11/1994 Levin		2011/0010856 A1	1/2011	Bell	
5,414,882 A	5/1995 Goodale		2011/0041247 A1	2/2011	Moon	
5,429,852 A *	7/1995 Quinn	A47C 7/18	2011/0099713 A1	5/2011	Gonser	
		297/452.26	2011/0265268 A1	11/2011	Scarleski	
5,473,783 A	12/1995 Allen		2011/0265269 A1	11/2011	Scarleski	
5,488,746 A	2/1996 Hudson		2011/0278888 A1	11/2011	Miles	
5,628,077 A	5/1997 Brigani		2012/0117778 A1	5/2012	Scarleski	
5,631,074 A	5/1997 Herlihy		2012/0137433 A1	6/2012	Snell et al.	
5,632,054 A	5/1997 Hutton et al.		2012/0151680 A1	6/2012	Scarleski	
5,815,865 A	10/1998 Washburn et al.		2012/0167302 A1	7/2012	Malouf	
5,860,174 A	1/1999 Failor		2012/0167307 A1	7/2012	Michael	
6,073,291 A	6/2000 Davis		2012/0174323 A1	7/2012	Platek	
6,274,520 B1	8/2001 Cordell		2012/0192356 A1	8/2012	Svoboda	
6,381,778 B1 *	5/2002 Peterson	A47C 27/005	2012/0246834 A1	10/2012	Scarleski	
		5/484	2012/0255120 A1	10/2012	Poston et al.	
6,457,196 B1	10/2002 Dykes et al.		2012/0260426 A1	10/2012	Dobin	
6,684,434 B2	2/2004 Ellis et al.		2012/0260432 A1	10/2012	Scarleski	
6,728,978 B1	5/2004 Nordin		2013/0019411 A1	1/2013	Scarleski	
6,795,989 B2	9/2004 Fairchild et al.		2013/0174349 A1	7/2013	Amaral et al.	
6,886,203 B2	5/2005 Drakos		2013/0212809 A1	8/2013	Scarleski	
6,966,083 B1	11/2005 Cheng		2013/0232698 A1	9/2013	Ward	
7,051,388 B1	5/2006 Taddeo		2014/0026318 A1	1/2014	Bethel et al.	
7,120,952 B1	10/2006 Bass et al.		2014/0075679 A1 *	3/2014	Scarleski	A47C 21/00
7,155,763 B2	1/2007 North					5/737
7,240,384 B2 *	7/2007 DuDonis	A47C 20/027	2015/0000043 A1 *	1/2015	Scarleski	A47C 21/00
		5/633				5/658
7,481,290 B2	1/2009 Pendzich		2015/0096120 A1 *	4/2015	Scarleski	A47C 31/105
7,581,270 B1	9/2009 Levesque					5/484
7,617,556 B2	11/2009 Rensink		2015/0096121 A1 *	4/2015	Scarleski	A47C 31/105
7,644,671 B2	1/2010 Smith					5/484
7,725,963 B2	6/2010 Johnson		2015/0128355 A1 *	5/2015	Scarleski	A47C 21/00
7,730,567 B2	6/2010 Jaeger					5/737
7,735,164 B1	6/2010 Patrick		2015/0128356 A1 *	5/2015	Scarleski	A47C 21/00
7,849,533 B1	12/2010 Receveur et al.					5/737
7,917,979 B2	4/2011 Amsler, Jr. et al.		2015/0208816 A1 *	7/2015	Scarleski	A47C 21/00
7,975,330 B2	7/2011 Receveur et al.					5/488
8,006,331 B1	8/2011 Scarleski		2015/0305512 A1 *	10/2015	Scarleski	A47C 21/00
8,087,111 B2	1/2012 Paris					5/510
8,122,541 B1	2/2012 Geogatos		2015/0359346 A1 *	12/2015	Scarleski	A47C 21/026
8,156,588 B2	4/2012 Svoboda					5/658
8,201,292 B2	6/2012 Dionne et al.		2015/0359348 A1 *	12/2015	Scarleski	A47C 21/028
8,246,706 B2	8/2012 Scarleski					5/659
8,510,880 B2	8/2013 Scarleski		2015/0359352 A1 *	12/2015	Scarleski	A47C 31/105
8,549,681 B2	10/2013 Scarleski					29/428
8,863,326 B2 *	10/2014 Scarleski	A47C 21/00	2015/0366362 A1 *	12/2015	Scarleski	A47C 21/026
		5/488				5/658
			2017/0007036 A1 *	1/2017	Scarleski	A47C 31/105

(56)

References Cited

U.S. PATENT DOCUMENTS

2017/0105542 A1* 4/2017 Scarleski A47C 31/105
2017/0105543 A1* 4/2017 Scarleski A47C 31/105
2017/0135493 A1* 5/2017 Scarleski A47C 21/00

FOREIGN PATENT DOCUMENTS

WO PCT/US2011/34537 5/2011
WO PCT/US2011/34551 8/2011
WO PCT/US13/47883 10/2013

OTHER PUBLICATIONS

U.S. Appl. No. 14/015,223, William Scarleski.
U.S. Appl. No. 14/046,047, William Scarleski.
<http://questoutfitters.com/coated.html>—May 6, 2010.
<http://www.rockywoods.com>—May 6, 2010.
<http://www.rockywoods.com/Fabrics-Hardware-Patterns-Kits/Medium-Weight-Nylon-Fabrics/Heat-Sealable-70-Denier-Nylon-Taffeta>—May 6, 2010.
http://www2.dupont.com/Products_and_Services/en_VN/nwyn.html—May 6, 2010.
<http://www.seattlefabrics.com/nylons.html>—May 6, 2010.
<http://www.mattressdirectonline.com>—May 5, 2010.
<http://www.nextag.com/INVACARE-MicroAir-Lateral-Rotation-628052627/prices.html> Sep. 14, 2009.
http://uncyclopedia.wikia.com/wiki/Mattress_racing—Sep. 14, 2009.
http://www.primeconveyor.com/productDetail.asp_Q_catID_E_92_A_subCatID_E_129 . . . Sep. 14, 2009.

* cited by examiner

Fig. 1

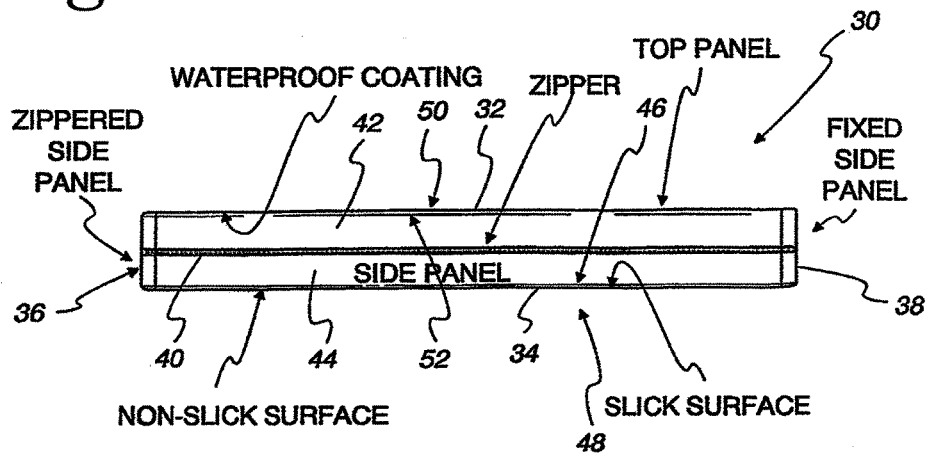


Fig. 1a

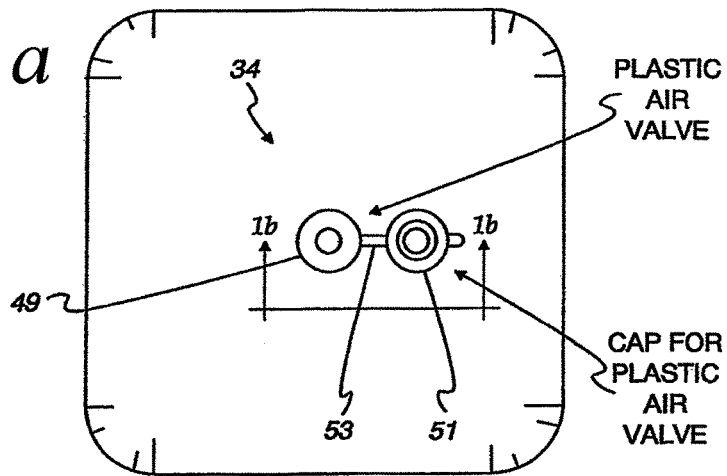
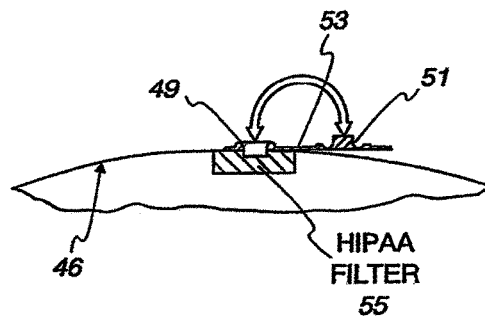


Fig. 1b



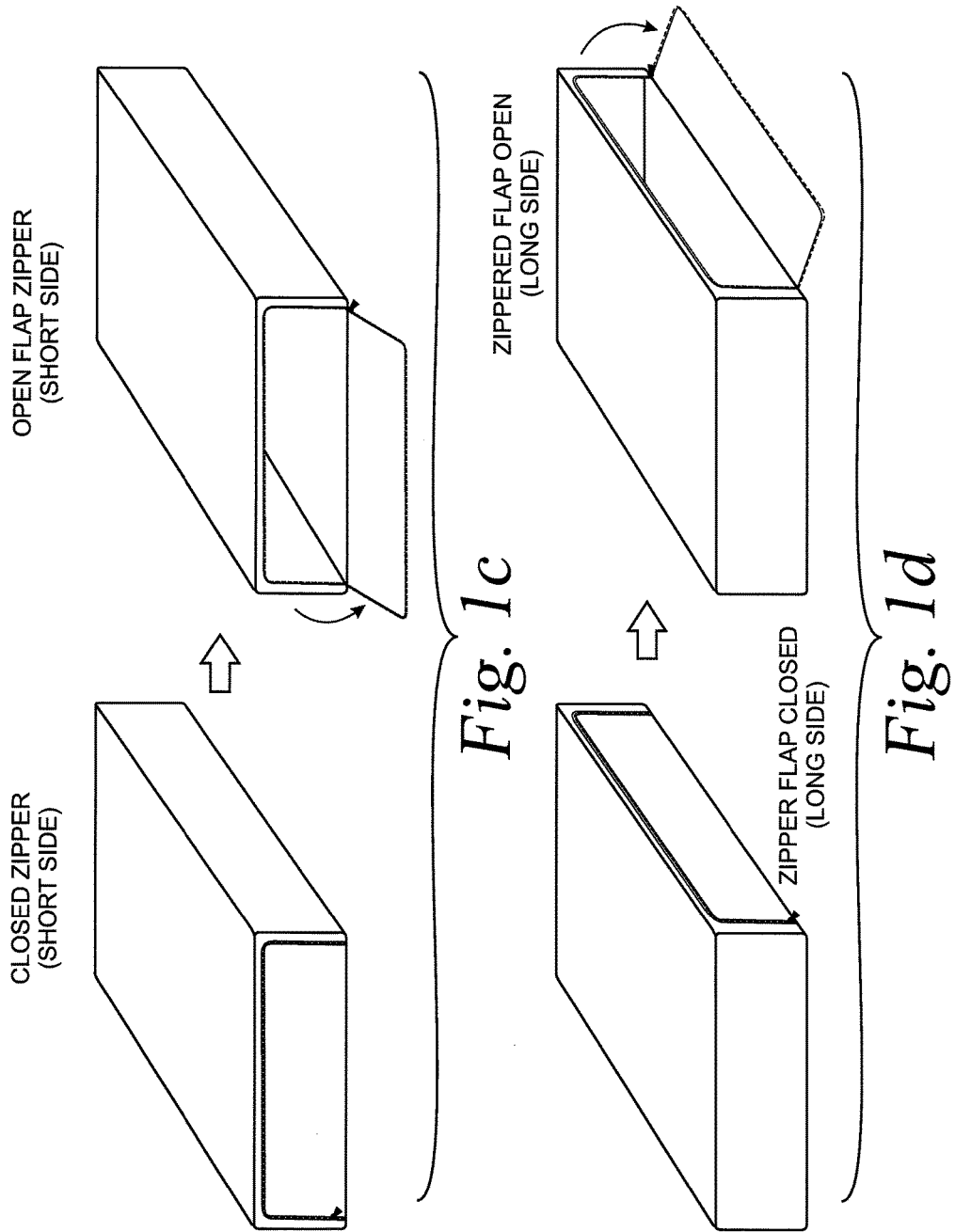


Fig. 2

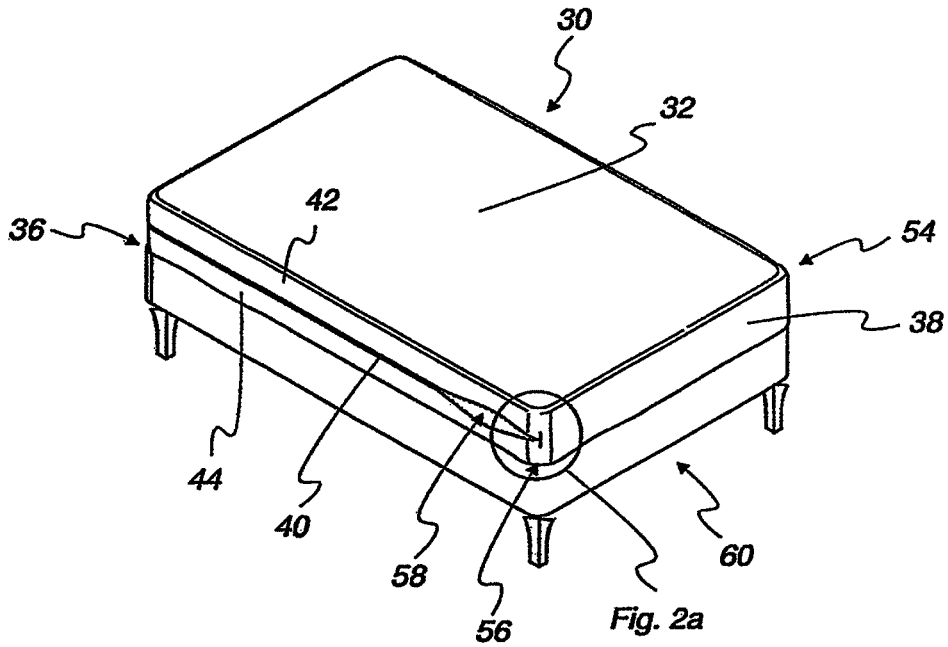


Fig. 2a

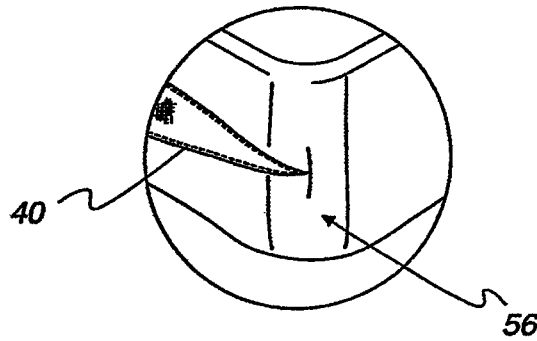


Fig. 3

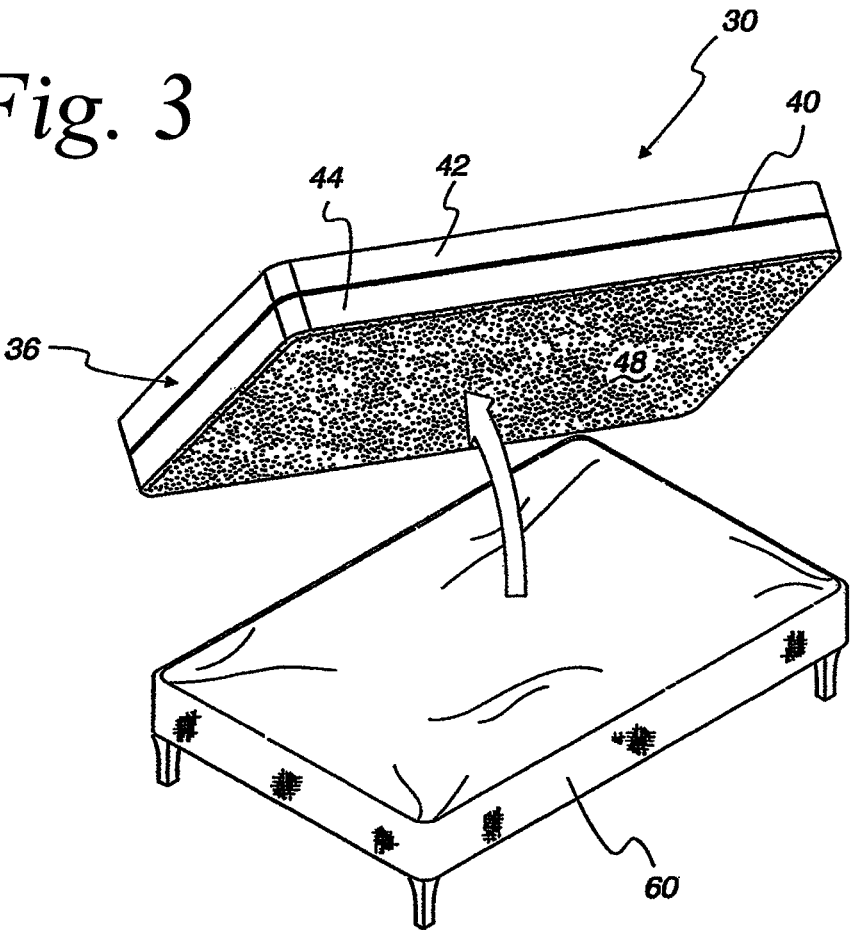


Fig. 4

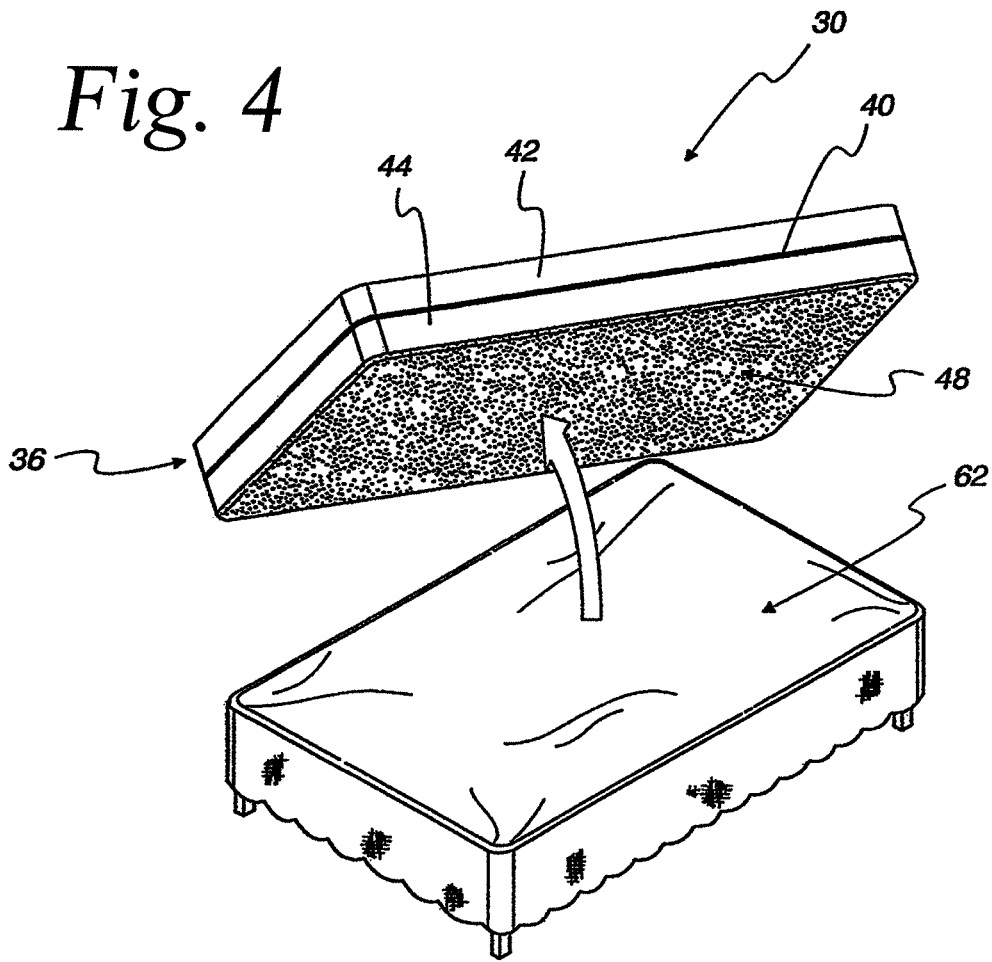


Fig. 5

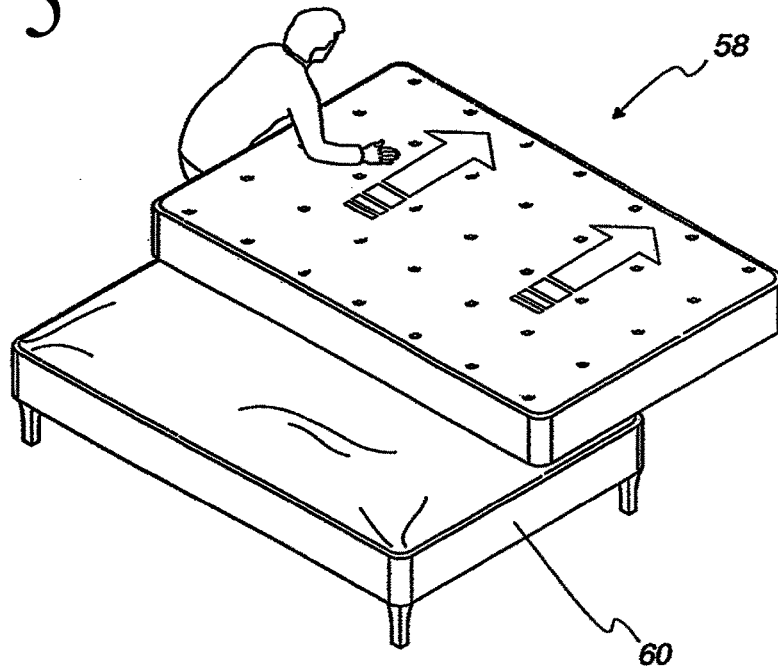


Fig. 6

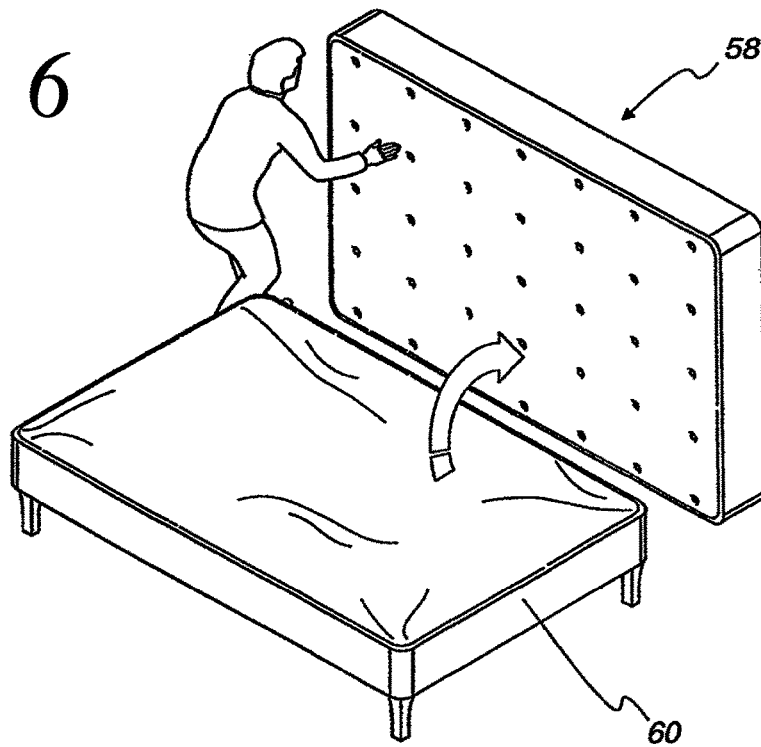


Fig. 7

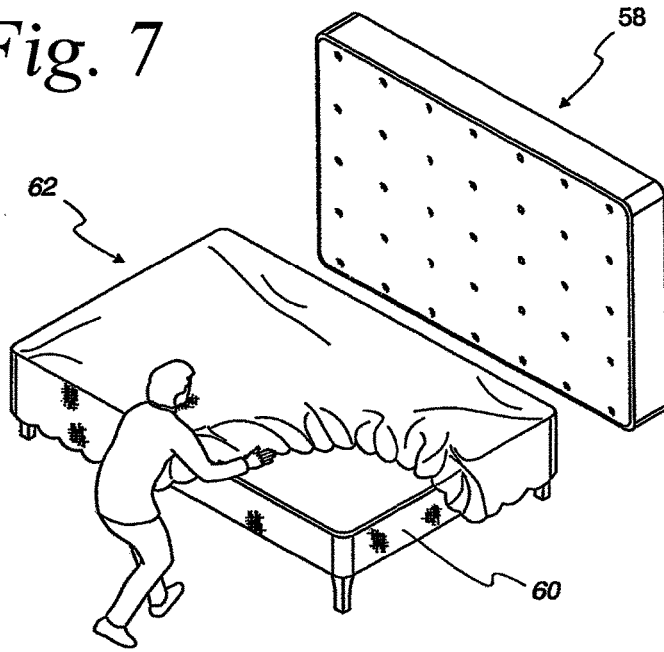


Fig. 8

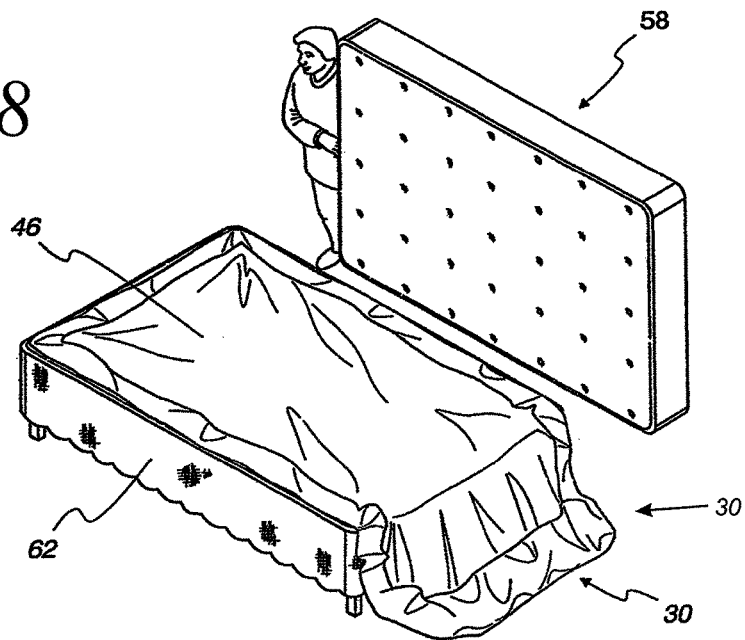


Fig. 9

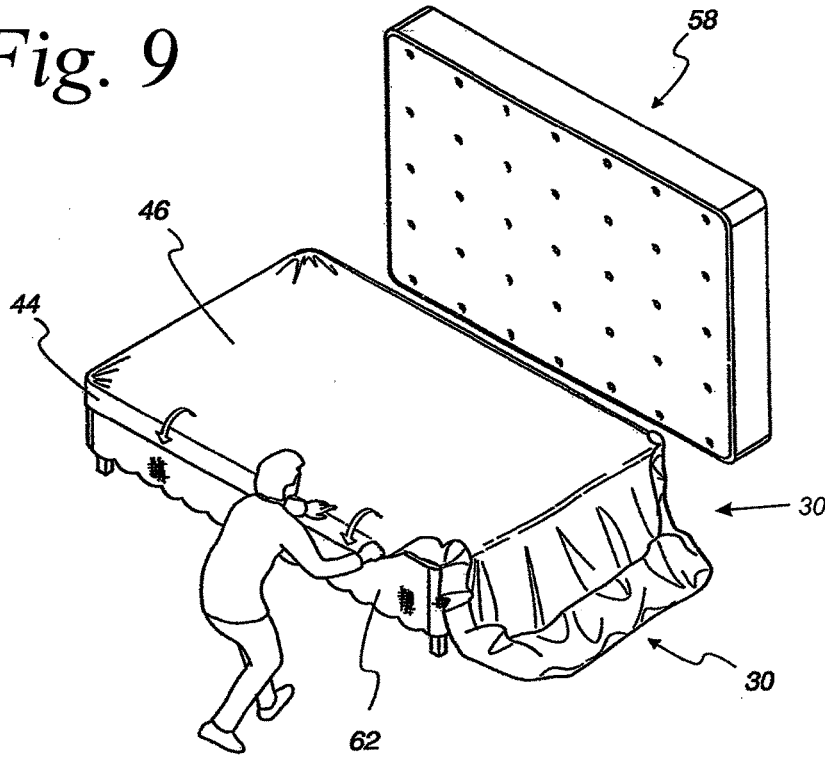


Fig. 10

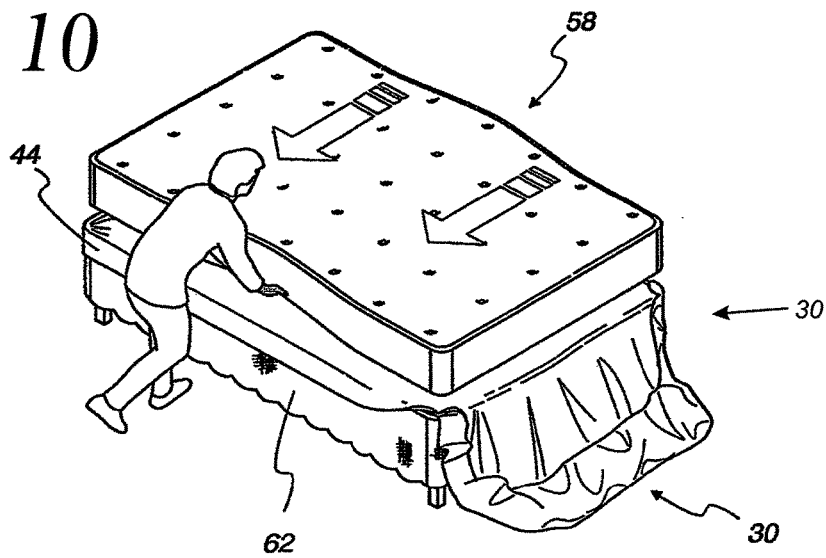


Fig. 11

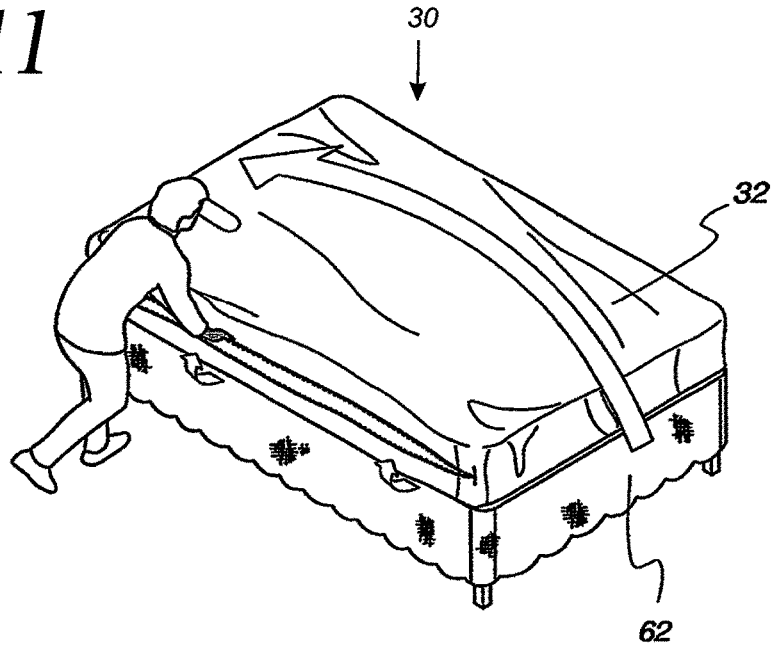


Fig. 12

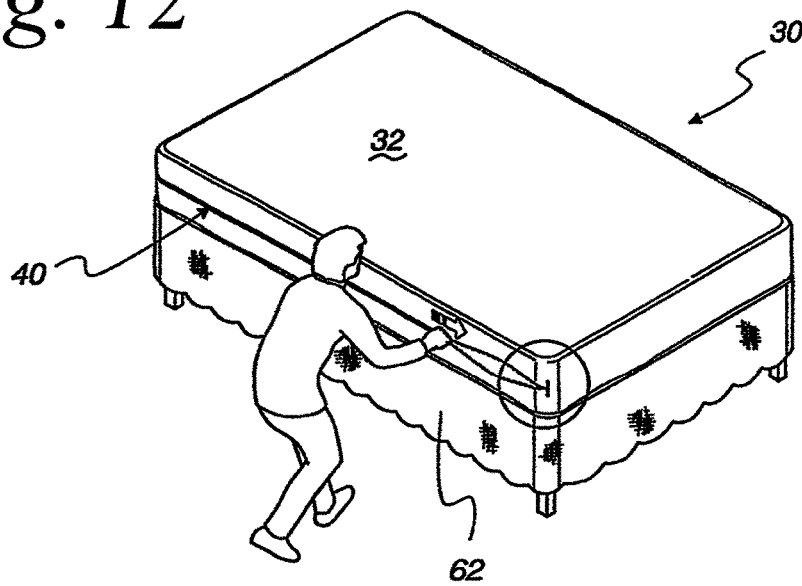


Fig. 13

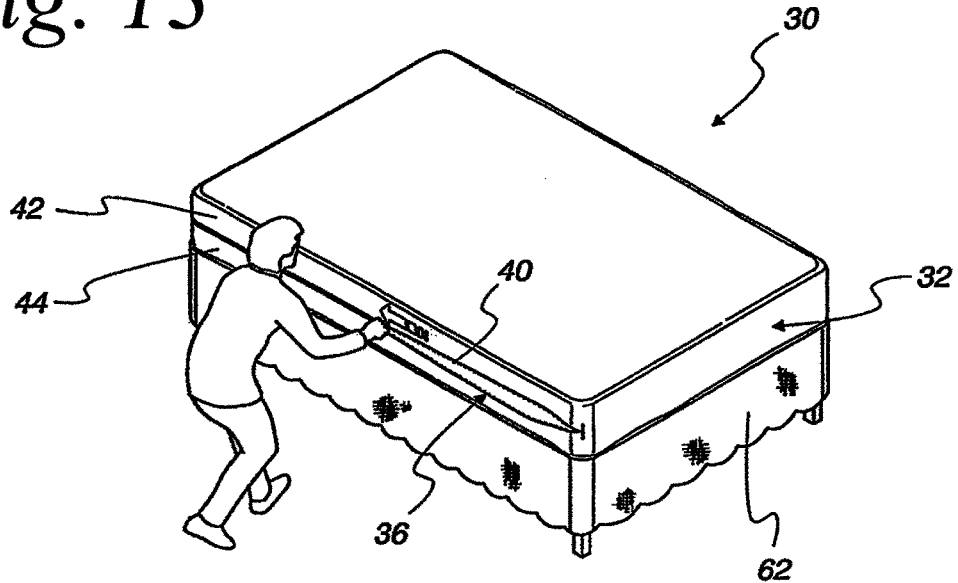


Fig. 14

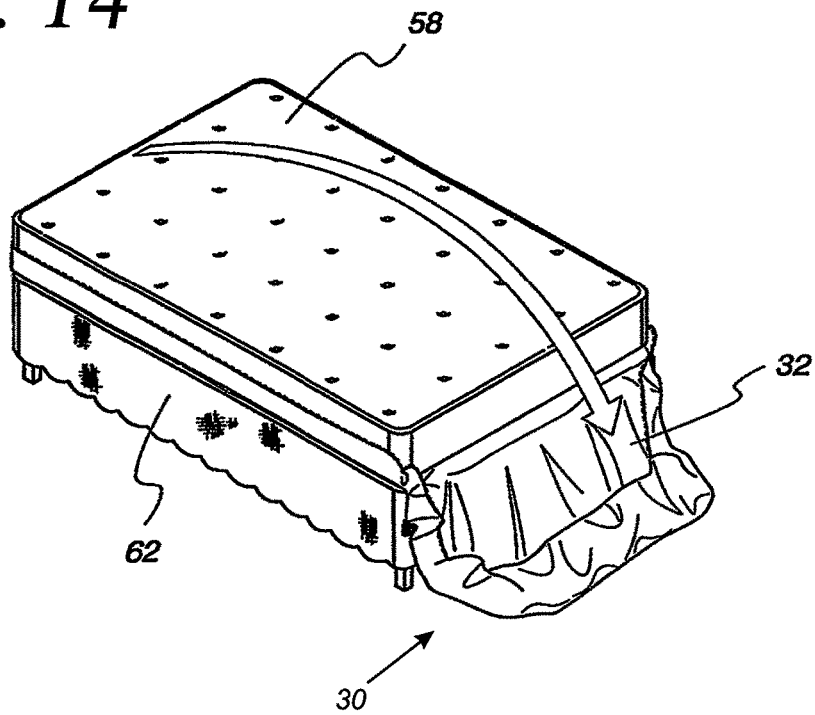


Fig. 15

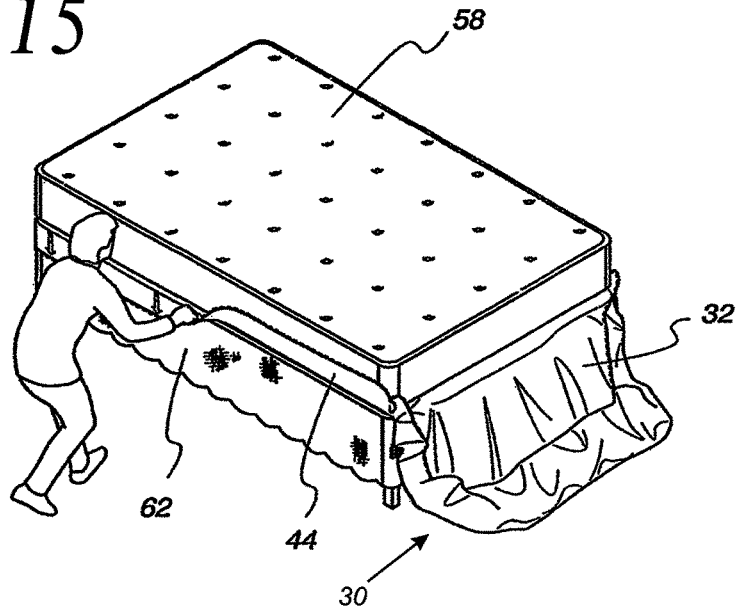


Fig. 16

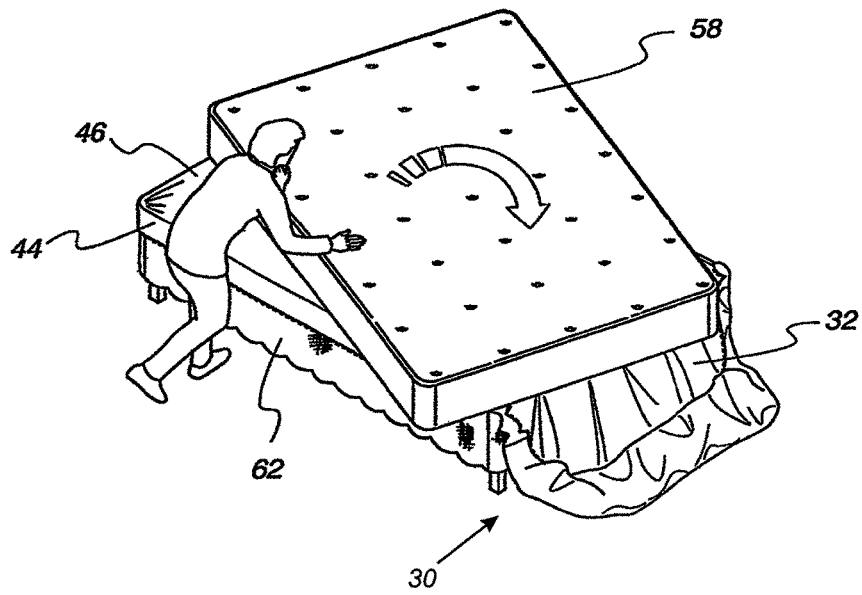


Fig. 17

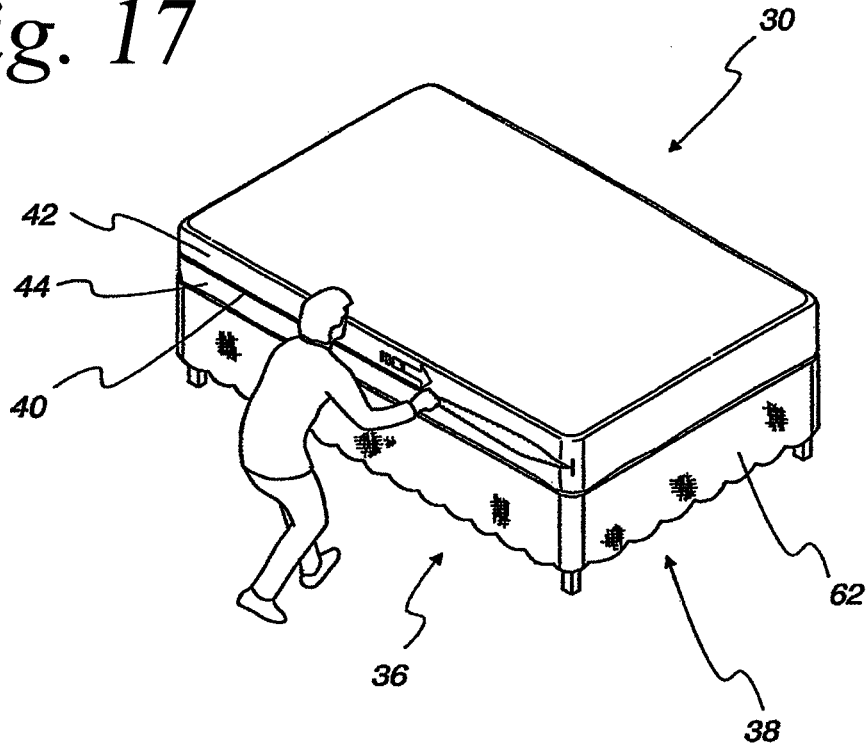


Fig. 17a

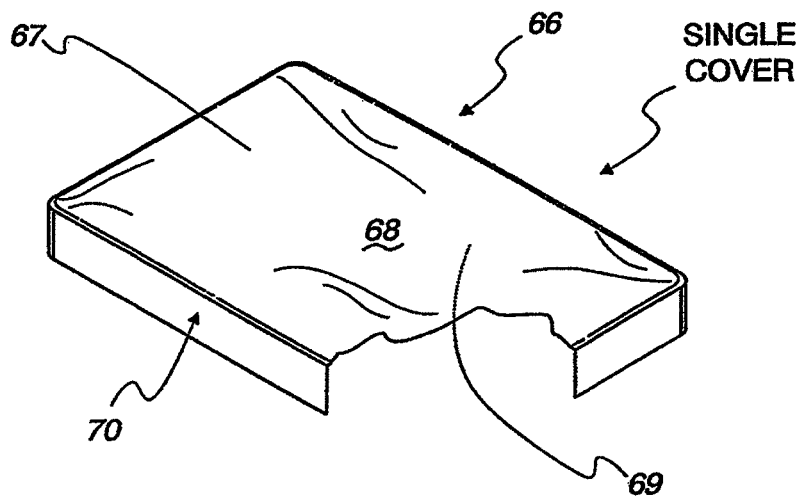


Fig. 17b

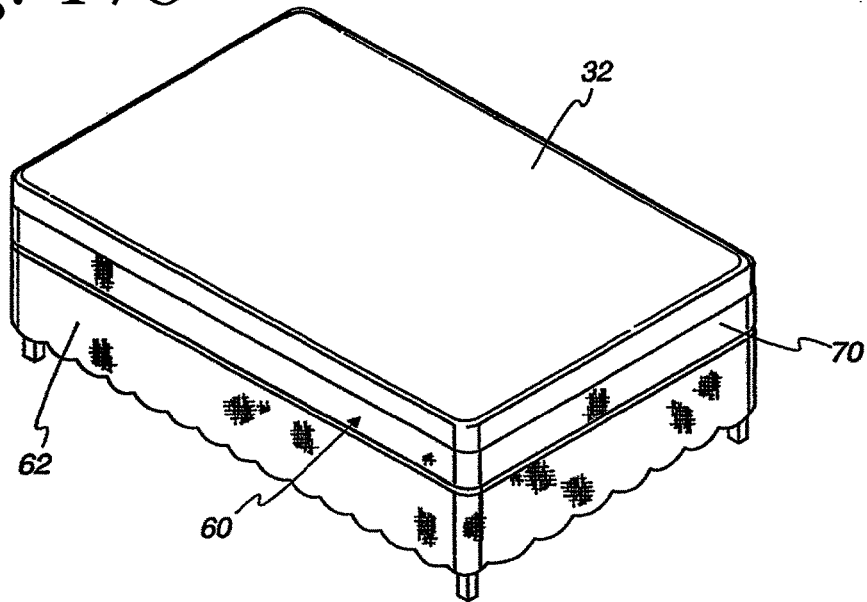


Fig. 17c

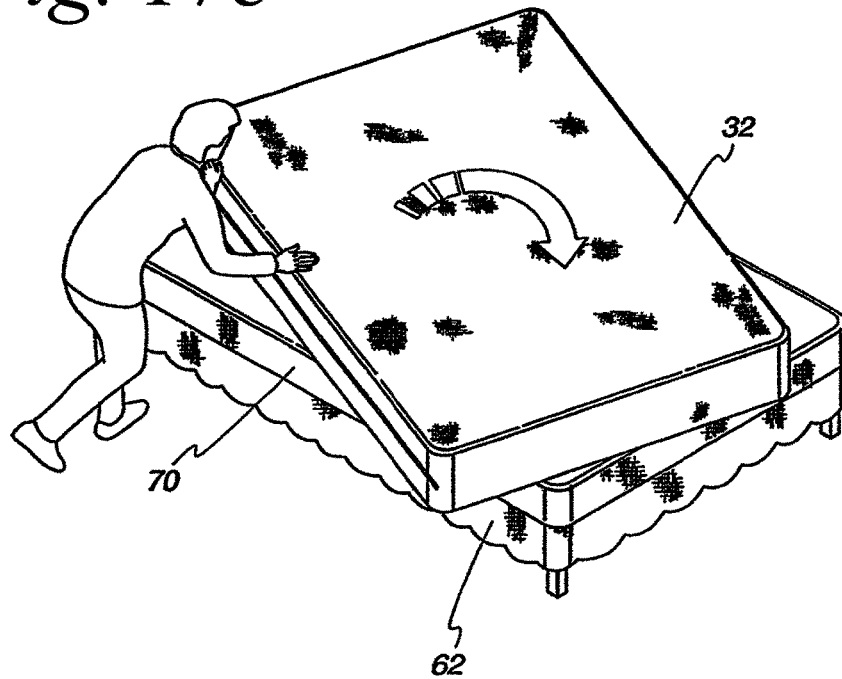
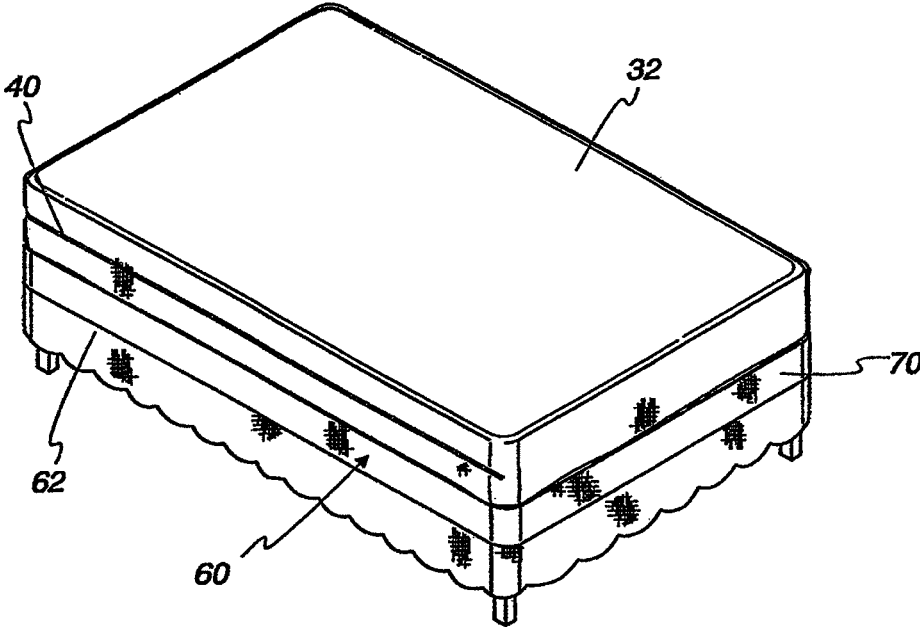


Fig. 17d



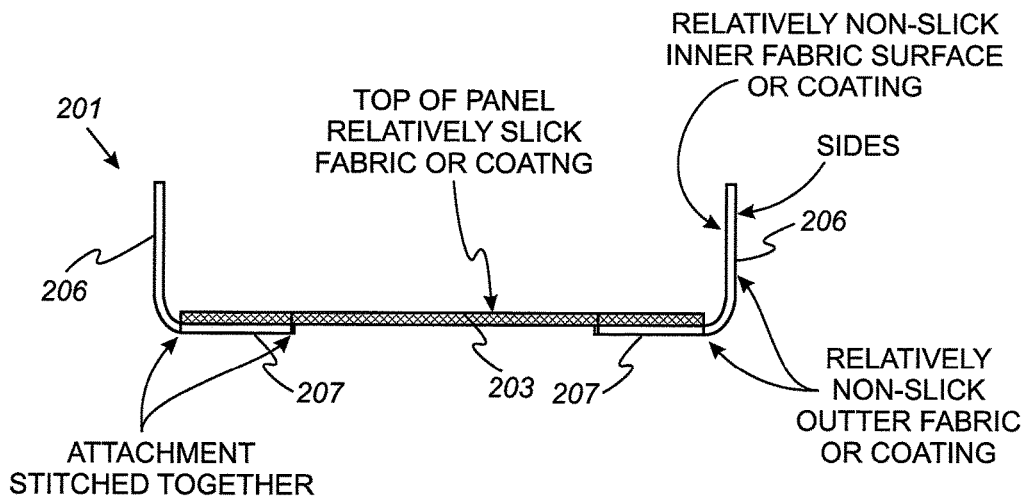


Fig. 17e

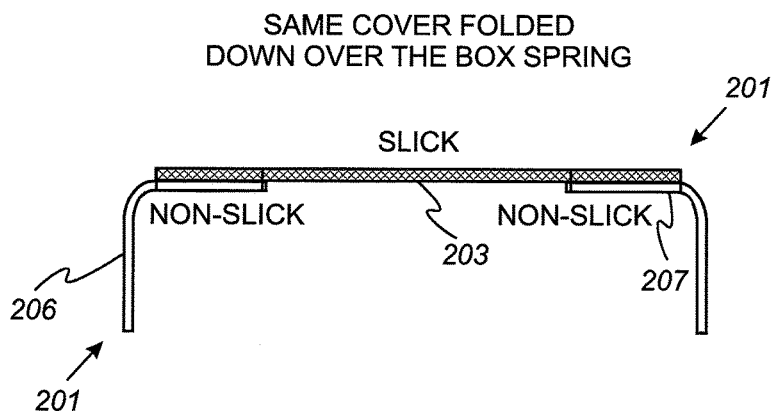


Fig. 17f

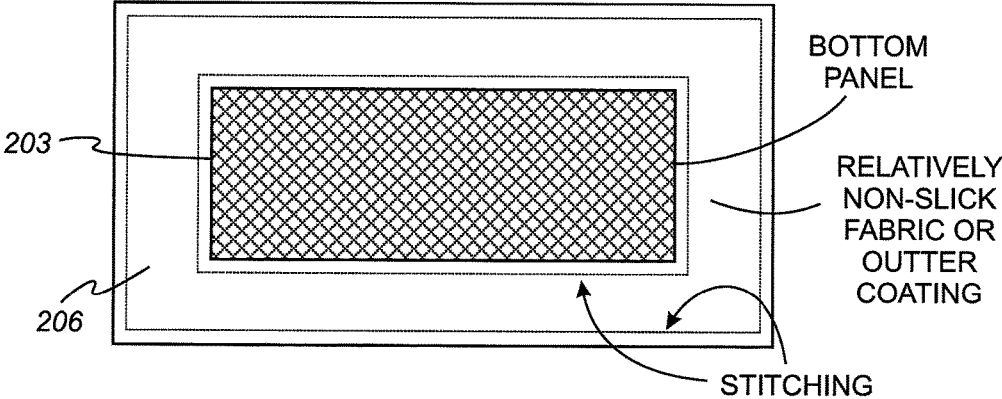


Fig. 17g

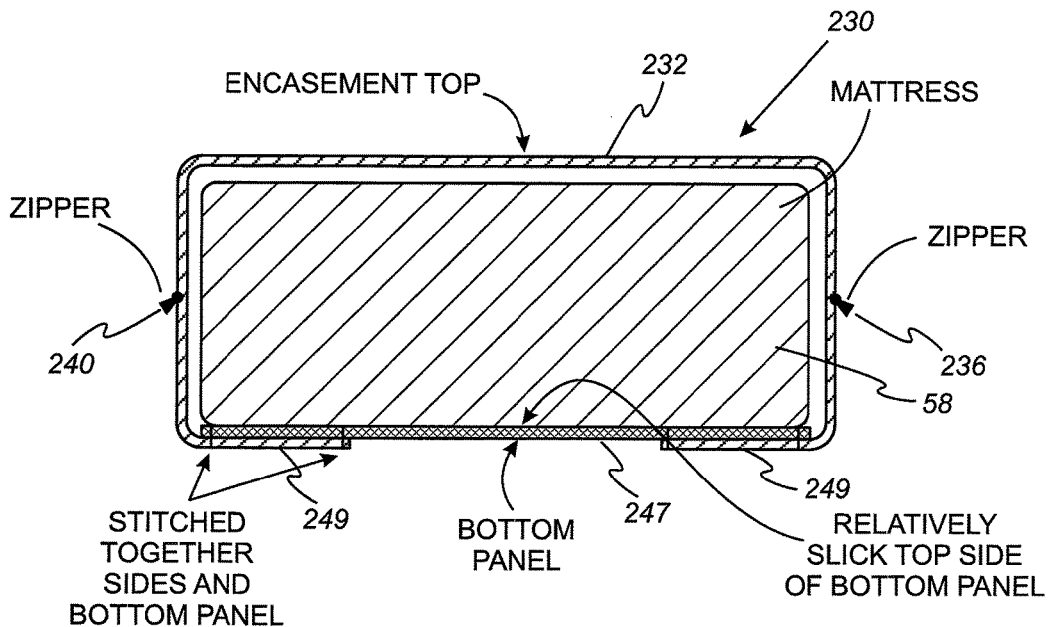


Fig. 17h

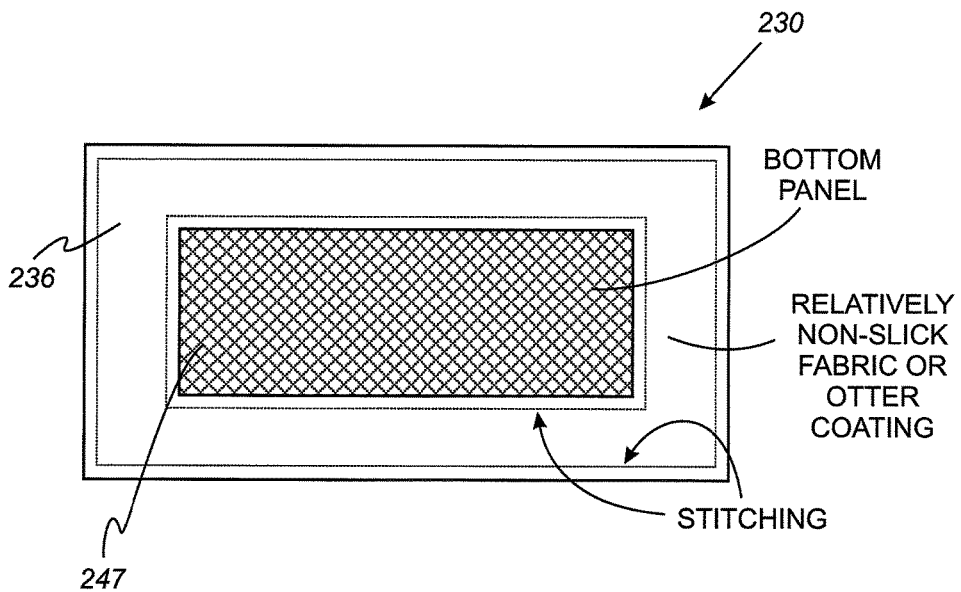
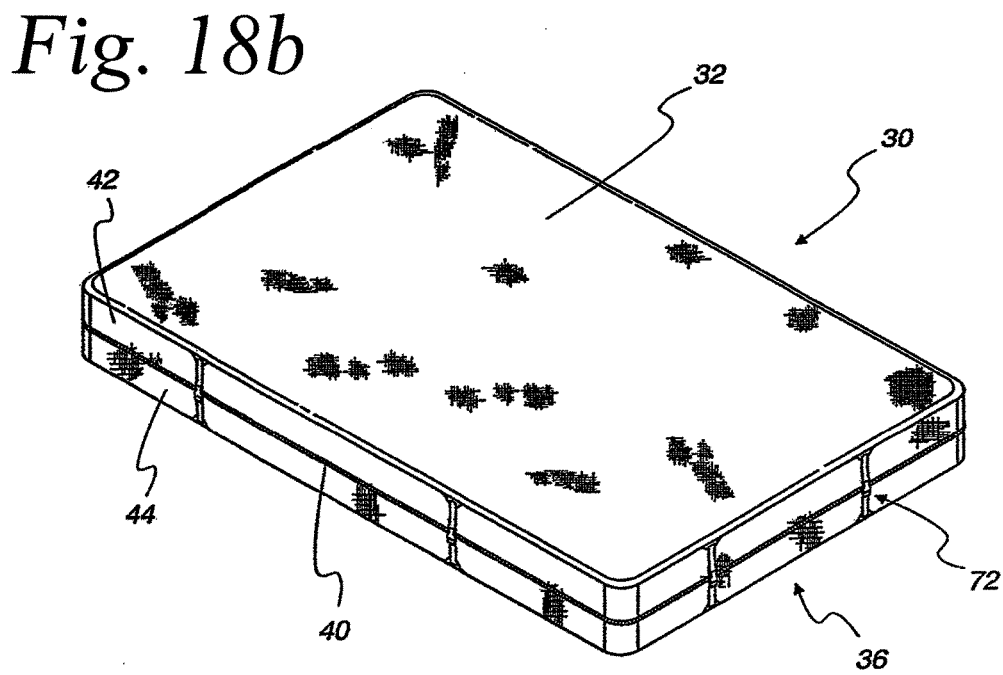
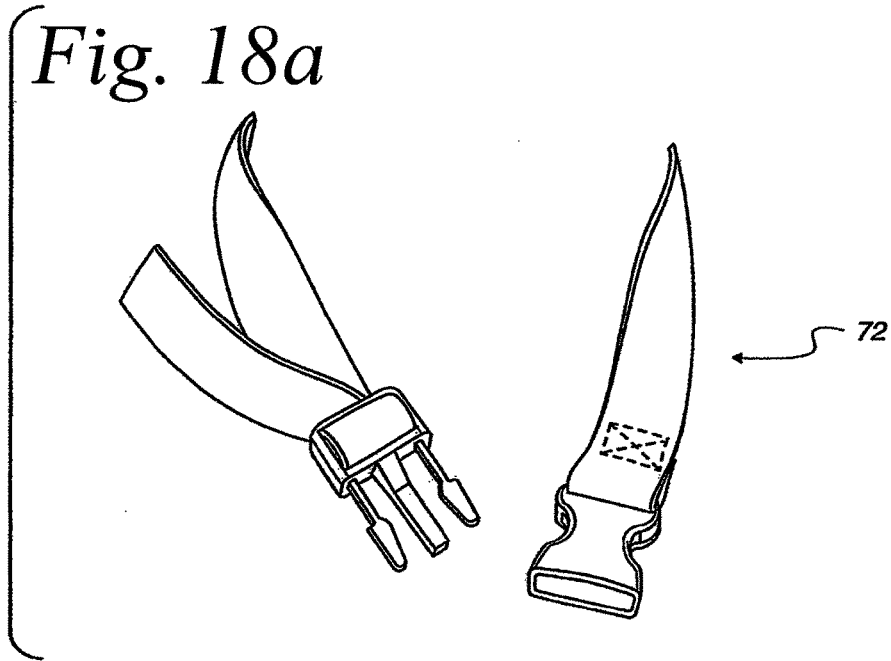


Fig. 17i



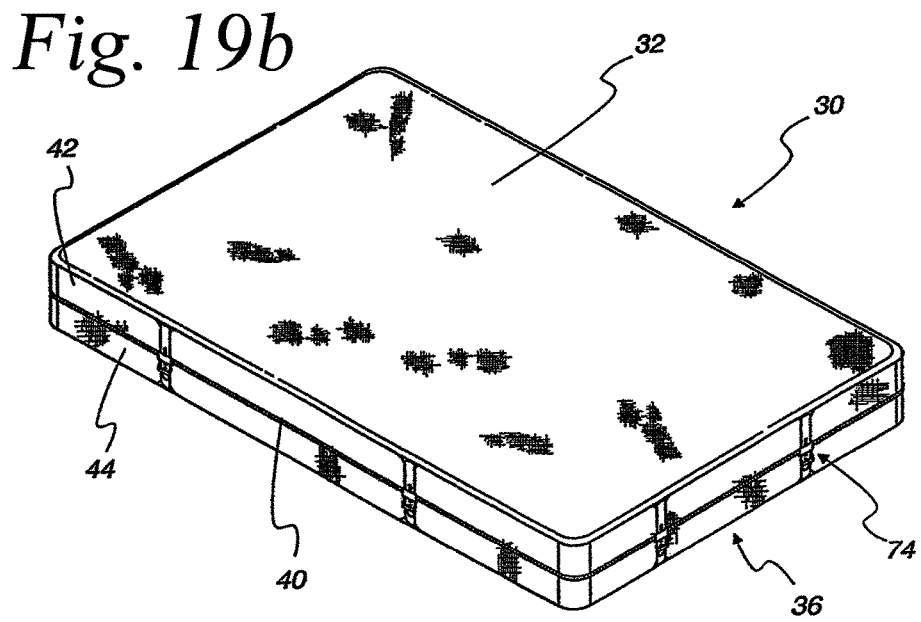
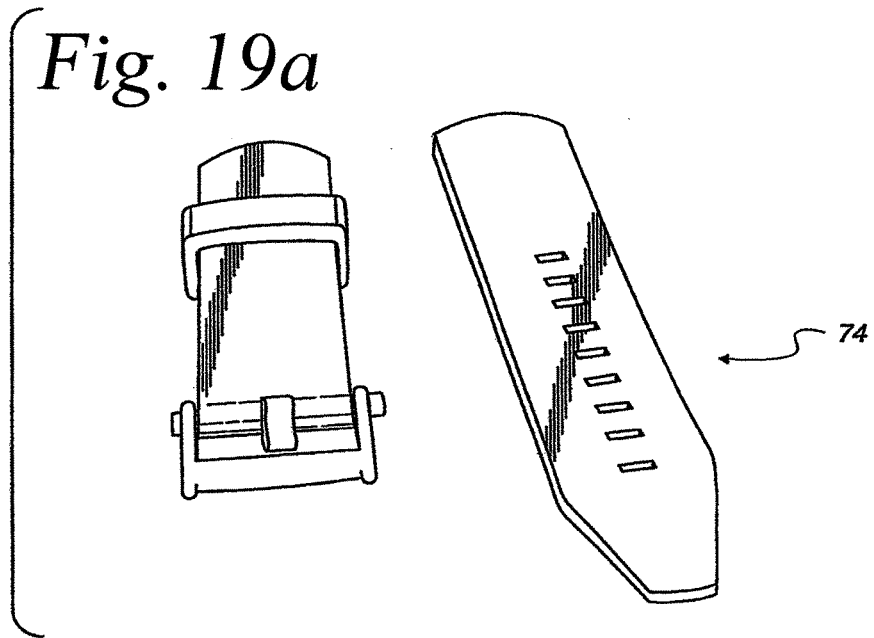


Fig. 20a

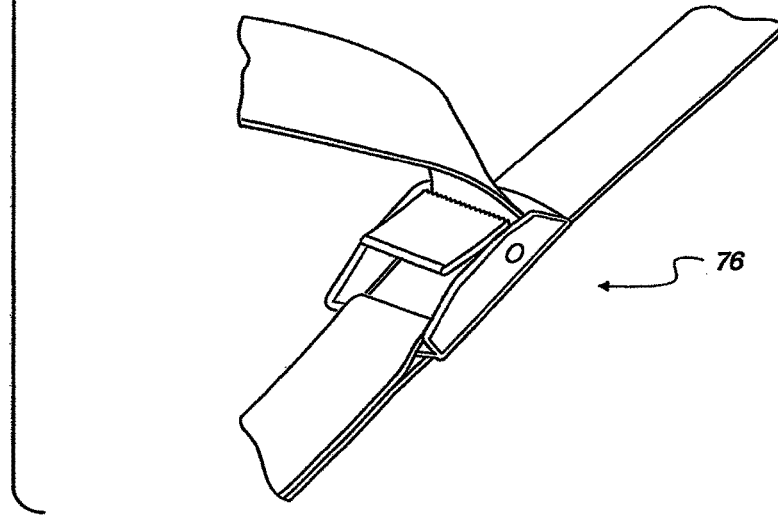


Fig. 20b

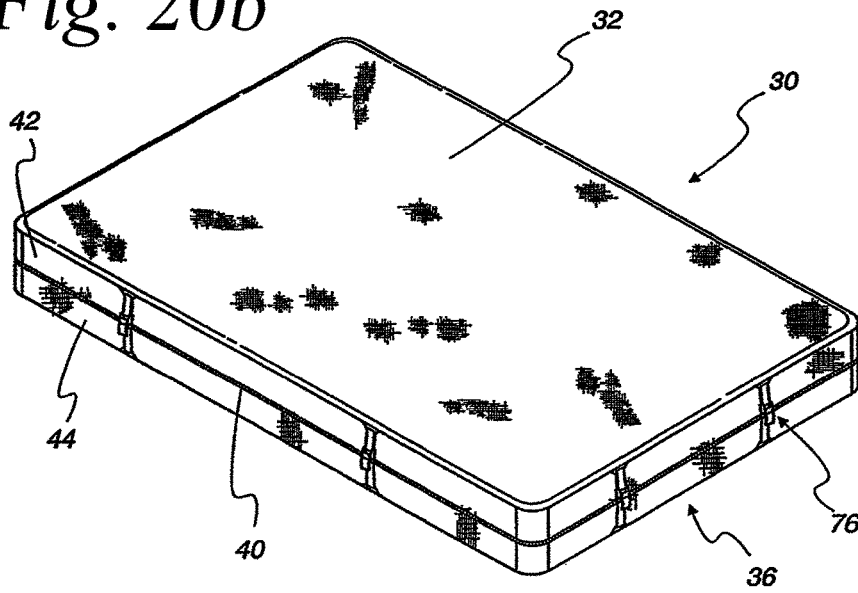


Fig. 21a

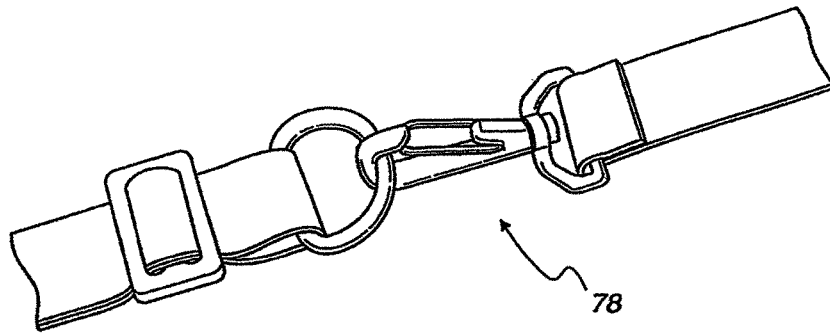


Fig. 21b

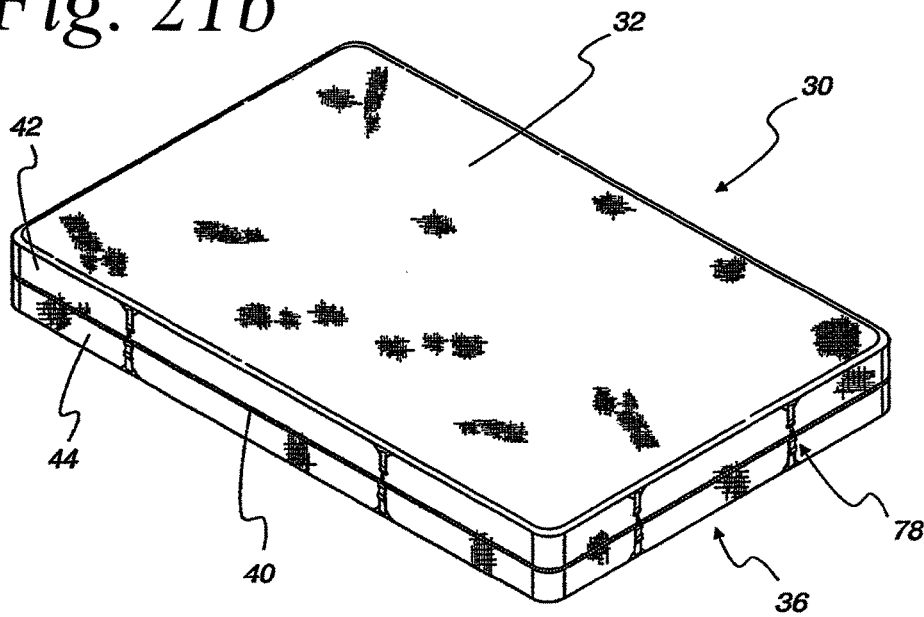


Fig. 22a

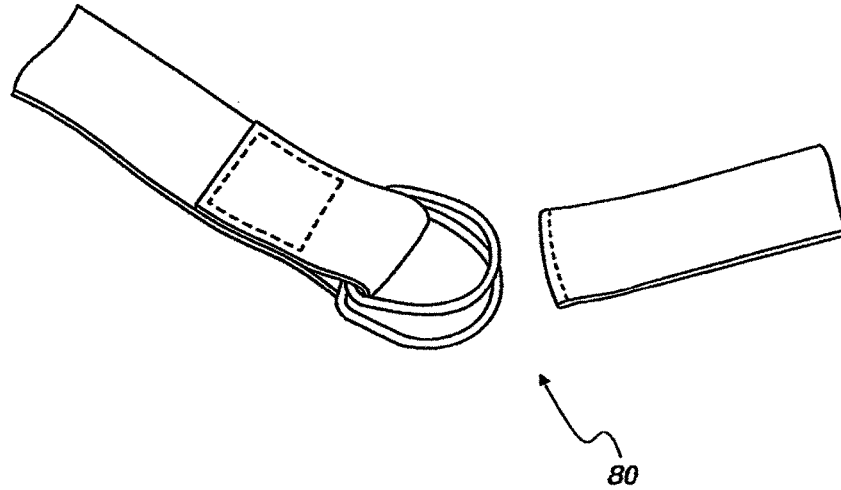


Fig. 22b

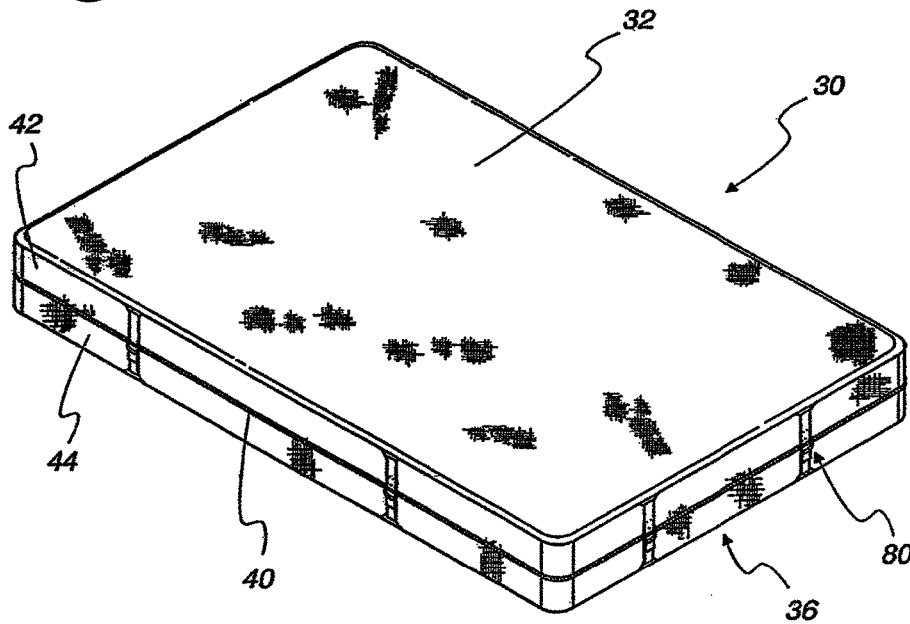


Fig. 23a

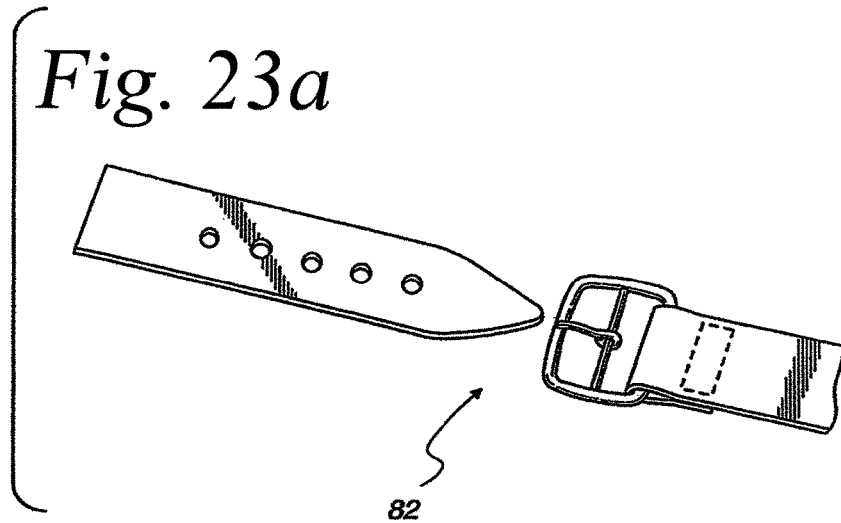


Fig. 23b

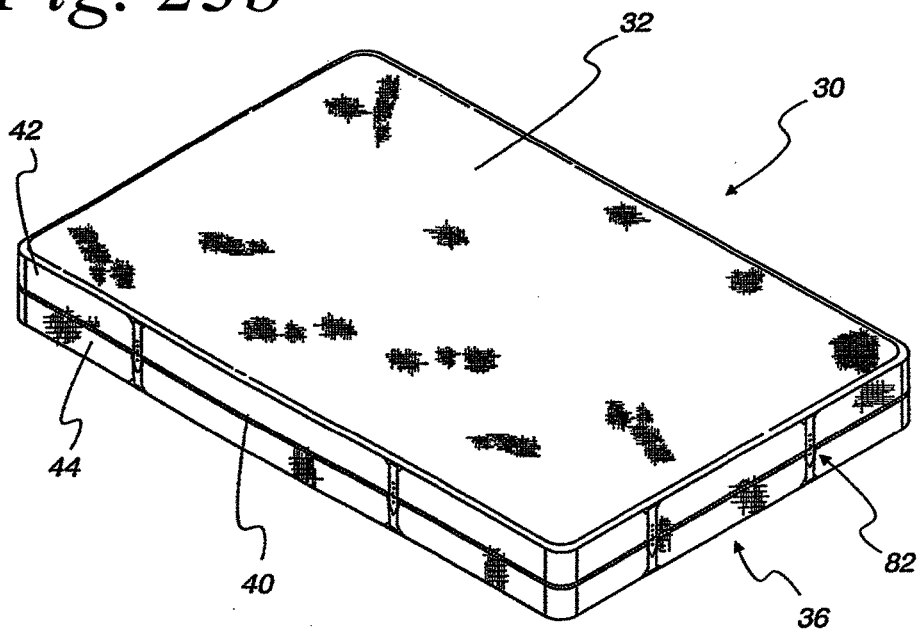


Fig. 24

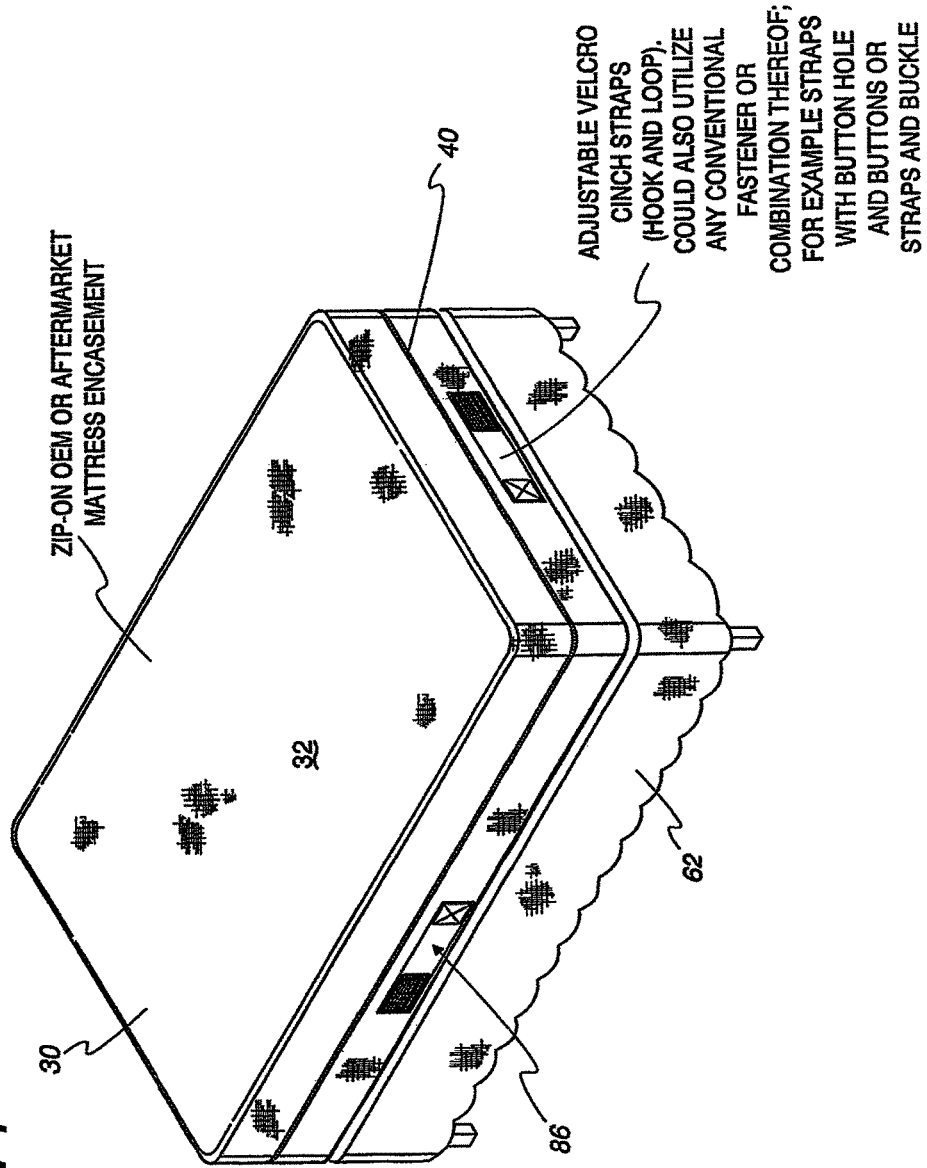
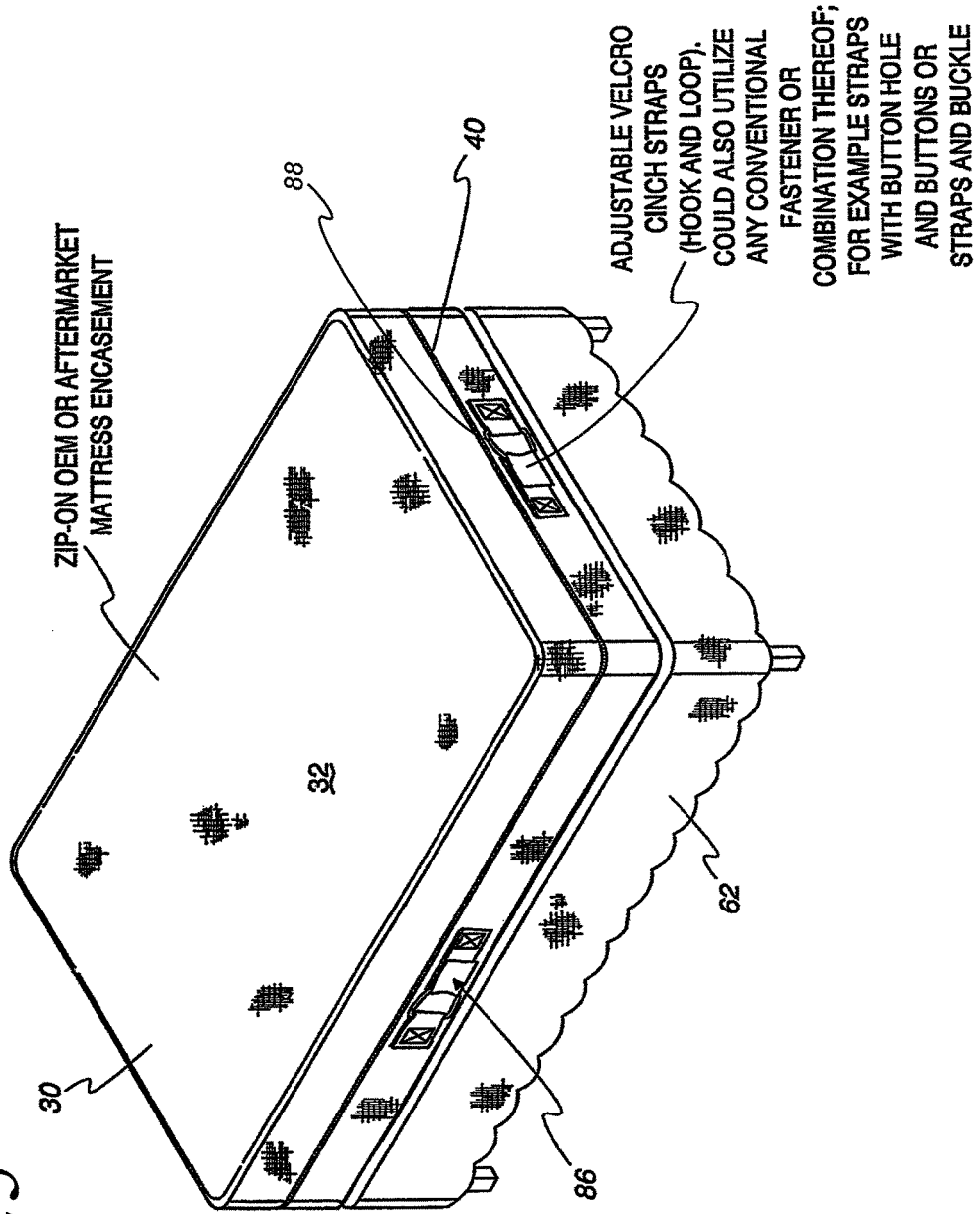


Fig. 25



PASSIVE MATTRESS ENCASEMENT**BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION**

1. Field of the Invention

The present invention relates to a passive mattress encasement which can be relatively easily installed over a mattress supported by a box spring or fixed or adjustable platform (hereinafter "foundation") which also facilitates rotation of the mattress even in applications in which a bed skirt is installed over the foundation and can accommodate a relatively wide range of mattress sizes.

2. Description of the Prior Art

Mattress encasements are used as a prophylactic cover over the entire mattress to protect the mattress from various situations, such as parasites and stains, for example, pet stains. Such encasements are also available for box springs. As used herein, the term encasement refers to mattress encasements and box spring encasements individually and collectively. Examples of such encasements are disclosed in US Patent Application Publication Nos.: US 2012/0260426; US 2012/0255120; 2012/0192356; 2012/0167302; and 2011/00100856 as well as U.S. Pat. Nos. 8,087,111 and 8,156,588, all hereinafter incorporated by reference.

Some known encasements are made from a vinyl material. There are several problems with such vinyl encasements. One such problem is that they are uncomfortable. Another problem relates to cleaning them after being in contact with blood, urine or other matter. Such vinyl encasements cannot be laundered. In order to solve this problem, encasements made from launderable materials have been developed. For example, U.S. Pat. No. 8,087,111 discloses an encasement formed from two layers; an inner layer and an outer layer. The outer layer is formed from cotton or other common encasement material or a material commonly used for mattress protectors, as well as bedding fabric, such as polyester or a polyester-cotton blend. The inner layer is formed as a waterproof membrane, for example, by way of a polyurethane or other suitable waterproof coating.

Because of the need for laundering, known encasements are formed with a zipper along three sides forming a pocket on one end to enable removal for laundering. In order to launder the encasement, the mattress is normally flipped upside down so that the mattress top is in contact with the box spring and the mattress bottom or encasement bottom is facing upwardly. Next, the mattress is slid off one end to enable the pocket to be slipped over one end of the mattress. The encasement is then slipped over the rest of the mattress bottom. The mattress is again flipped over so that the mattress bottom is resting on the foundation and the comfort top is facing upwardly. The top layer of the encasement with the waterproof membrane is then zipped to the bottom layer to complete the installation. In order to remove an encasement, the zipper is unzipped along all three sides and the mattress is lifted to remove the encasement.

Mattresses are relatively heavy items. The weight of a mattress varies as a function of the coil core size, the gauge of the coil and the type of foam material used. An average king size mattress weighs between 85 and 115 pounds. High end king size mattresses with latex or memory foam can weigh as much as 300 pounds (<http://www.mattressdirectonline.com>). As such, lifting the mattress to remove the encasement and flipping it over twice to install a clean encasement can be an extremely difficult task, especially considering hotels and motels where multiple encasements may be changed in a single day.

Another problem relates to rotation of a mattress that is encased in an encasement. For one thing, the mattress handles are covered by the encasement making an encased mattress difficult to rotate. The problem is especially acute if there is a bed skirt on the foundation. In that case, rotation of the mattress would move the bed skirt out of position, essentially requiring the mattress to be rotated by lifting the mattress and rotating the mattress while lifted.

Another problem relates to the fact that there is no standard size for a mattress. Commonly available mattresses are normally 4" to 18" in depth. Some available mattresses are 20" in depth or more. Although the length and width measurements of various mattresses are fairly standard, there are known differences in the lengths of the perimeters of the various mattresses. Although different encasement sizes are manufactured to accommodate the various mattress depths, known encasements do not address the differences in perimeter lengths. As such, the encasements, depending on the mattress size, do not always provide a snug fit relative to the mattress, which is highly undesirable from a housekeeping standpoint.

Thus, there is a need for an encasement that can easily be installed or removed for changing or laundering and facilitates rotation of the mattress to even out body impressions, even in applications which include a bed skirt and can accommodate a range of mattress depths.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

Briefly, the present invention relates to an active encasement, which can be relatively easily installed or removed over a mattress supported by a foundation. The encasement is formed to encapsulate a mattress and includes a top panel, a bottom panel and four side panels. One or more of the four side panels are zippered together. In an embodiment with one, two, or three zippered side panels, the unzipped side panels may be configured to fixedly connect the top panel to the bottom panel. The top and bottom panels as well as the side panels may be made from a conventional or non-conventional encasement material or a material commonly used for mattress protectors, as well as conventional bedding material and/or waterproof and/or spill proof and/or moisture proof and/or anti-bacterial and/or anti-allergen and/or anti-mite and/or bed bug proof material, such as TPU polyurethane coated terry cotton, polyester knit, vinyl, bamboo fabric, or silver infused or coated type material (hereinafter "materials"), or any combination of the above. The underside of the top panel and optionally the inside of the side panels may be coated or embossed with a waterproof layer or coating, such as polyurethane, to form a waterproof membrane.

In accordance with an important aspect of one embodiment of the invention, an interior surface of the bottom panel is formed with a slick surface while the exterior surface of the bottom panel faces outwardly and is adapted to be in contact with the foundation or bed skirt. In this embodiment, the exterior surface of the bottom panel of the encasement is formed as a non-slick surface. The non-slick surface provides a frictional relationship between the exterior surface of the bottom panel of the encasement and the foundation or bed skirt while the encasement is being installed, removed, or rotated, over a mattress. The slick interior surface of the bottom panel allows a mattress to be rotated once the bottom panel is juxtaposed between the mattress and the foundation in an application in which the encasement is unzipped and the top panel is disposed on the floor adjacent one end of the mattress. The present invention also facilitates installation

and removal of the encasement over a mattress. Optional straps may be provided, rigidly affixed to the encasement. The straps allow the encasement to be snugged against the mattress to enable the encasement to be used with a relatively wide range of mattress depths and perimeter lengths and still provide a snug fit.

DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWING

These and other advantages of the present invention will be readily understood with reference to the following specification and attached drawing wherein:

FIG. 1 is a side elevational view of one embodiment of an encasement in accordance with the present invention.

FIG. 1a is a bottom view of the encasement shown in FIG. 1 illustrating an optional air valve with an optional cap integrally formed in a bottom panel of the encasement.

FIG. 1b is a section view along line 1b-1b of FIG. 1a illustrating an optional filter, such as a HEPA filter attached to an interior or exterior surface of the encasement for filtering air into and out of the encasement.

FIG. 1c is an alternate embodiment of the invention in which a zipper is disposed in a short side panel on one end along three (3) edges of the side panel, illustrating the encasement zipped and unzipped.

FIG. 1d is similar to FIG. 1c but illustrating a zipper on a long side panel.

FIG. 2 is an isometric view of mattress supported by a foundation in which the mattress is covered with an encasement, shown with the encasement partially unzipped.

FIG. 2a is an enlarged partial exploded view of one corner of the mattress illustrated in FIG. 2.

FIG. 3 is an isometric view of a mattress covered with an encasement, shown removed from the foundation.

FIG. 4 is similar to FIG. 3 except illustrating a bed skirt covering the foundation.

FIG. 5 is an isometric view of a mattress and a foundation illustrating one person removing the mattress from the foundation covered with a bed skirt, shown with the mattress partially removed.

FIG. 6 is similar to FIG. 5, but shown with the mattress totally removed.

FIG. 7 is similar to FIG. 6, but illustrating a person installing a bed skirt on a foundation.

FIG. 8 illustrates the bed skirt installed and an encasement in accordance with the present invention laying on top of the foundation, shown fully unzipped with a bottom panel in contact with the foundation and the top panel on the floor at one end of the bed and a lower portion of the unzipped side panel resting on an inner surface of the bottom panel.

FIG. 9 is similar to FIG. 8 illustrating a person unfolding a portion of the side panel that was resting on the inner surface of the bottom panel so that side panel portions of the encasement are folded down over the sides of the bed skirt.

FIG. 10 illustrates a person sliding the mattress on top of the inner surface of the bottom panel of the encasement.

FIG. 11 illustrates a top panel of the encasement being placed over the top of the mattress.

FIG. 12 illustrates an upper side panel portion and a lower side panel portion being zipped together.

FIG. 13 illustrates the upper and lower side panel portions of an encasement being unzipped in preparation for rotation of the mattress.

FIG. 14 illustrates the top panel of an encasement removed from the mattress and draped on the floor at one end of the mattress.

FIG. 15 illustrates the lower side panel portions of the encasement being folded down over the bed skirt.

FIG. 16 illustrates rotation of the mattress while the encasement and bed skirt remains in place.

FIG. 17 illustrates the upper and lower side panel portions being zipped together after the top panel of the encasement has been re-positioned over the top of the mattress, as shown in FIG. 11.

FIG. 17a is an isomeric drawing of a single cover that may be incorporated with the present invention.

FIGS. 17b-17d illustrate the process of rotating a mattress using the cover illustrated in FIG. 17a.

FIG. 17e is an alternate embodiment of the cover illustrated in FIG. 17a illustrating an embodiment in which the side panels overlap a portion of the rectangular panel of the cover, shown in a position in which it is attached to the underside of a mattress.

FIG. 17f is similar to FIG. 17d but shown in a position in which the cover is flipped down over a foundation.

FIG. 17g is a bottom view of the embodiment illustrated in FIG. 17e.

FIG. 17h is a cross-sectional view of an alternate embodiment of an encasement.

FIG. 17i is a bottom view of the cover illustrated in FIG. 17h.

FIG. 18a is an isometric view of a first embodiment of an optional adjustable belt and buckle for use on an encasement in accordance with an alternate embodiment of the invention.

FIG. 18b is an isomeric view of the optional adjustable belt and buckle installed in various locations of an encasement installed on a mattress.

FIG. 19a is an isometric view of a second embodiment of an optional adjustable belt and buckle for use on an encasement in accordance with an alternate embodiment of the invention.

FIG. 19b is an isomeric view of the optional adjustable belt and buckle illustrated in FIG. 19a installed in various locations of an encasement installed on a mattress.

FIG. 20a is an isometric view of a third embodiment of an optional adjustable belt and buckle for use on an encasement in accordance with an alternate embodiment of the invention.

FIG. 20b is an isomeric view of the optional adjustable belt and buckle illustrated in FIG. 20a installed in various locations of an encasement installed on a mattress.

FIG. 21a is an isometric view of a fourth embodiment of an optional adjustable belt and buckle for use on an encasement in accordance with an alternate embodiment of the invention.

FIG. 21b is an isomeric view of the optional adjustable belt and buckle illustrated in FIG. 21a installed in various locations of an encasement installed on a mattress.

FIG. 22a is an isometric view of a fifth embodiment of an optional adjustable belt and buckle for use on an encasement in accordance with an alternate embodiment of the invention.

FIG. 22b is an isomeric view of the optional adjustable belt and buckle illustrated in FIG. 22a installed in various locations of an encasement installed on a mattress.

FIG. 23a is an isometric view of a sixth embodiment of an optional adjustable belt and buckle for use on an encasement in accordance with an alternate embodiment of the invention.

FIG. 23b is an isomeric view of the optional adjustable belt and buckle illustrated in FIG. 23a installed in various locations of an encasement installed on a mattress.

FIG. 24 is an isometric view of a bed shown with an encasement encasing a mattress illustrating optional horizontal straps to snug the encasement relative to the mattress.

FIG. 25 is similar to FIG. 24 and illustrates an alternative embodiment of the horizontal straps illustrated in FIG. 24.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION

The present invention relates to a passive encasement which can be relatively easily installed or removed over a mattress supported by a foundation. The encasement is formed to encapsulate a mattress and includes a top panel, a bottom panel and four side panels and a conventional, or alternatively, a non-conventional, zipper and zipper enclosure, as well as zippers and zipper enclosures typically used for encasements (hereinafter “zipper”). As used herein, a side panel is understood to mean those portions or the encasement that contact the side panels of the mattress when the encasement is installed. One or more of the side panels are zippered together. In embodiments in which one, two, or three panels are zippered together, the un-zippered side panel(s) may be configured to fixedly connect the top panel to the bottom panel. The top and bottom panels, as well as the side panels, may be made from a conventional encasement material or a material commonly used for mattress protectors, as well as conventional bedding material, as described above. The underside of the top panel and optionally the inside of the side panels may be coated with a waterproof coating, such as polyurethane, to form a waterproof membrane.

In alternative embodiments, the bottom panel may be formed to attach directly to the side panels of the encasement. In this embodiment, the top panel and side panels may be integrally formed and zipper directly to the bottom panel.

In accordance with an important aspect of the invention, the bottom panel is formed with a slick interior surface and a non-slick exterior surface. The exterior non-slick surface allows a mattress to be rotated without affecting the position of an underlying bed skirt in applications in which a bed skirt is covering the foundation while the slick interior surface facilitates rotation of the mattress. The present invention also facilitates installation and removal of the encasement over a mattress or a foundation, such as a box spring. Optional straps may be provided, rigidly affixed to the encasement. The straps allow the encasement to be snugged against the mattress or foundation to enable the encasement to be used with a relatively wide range of mattress and foundation depths and still provide a snug fit.

Four embodiments of the encasement are illustrated. FIGS. 1, 2, and 2a illustrate one embodiment of the encasement. FIGS. 1a and 1b illustrate an optional second embodiment. FIGS. 18a-23b illustrate a third embodiment. FIG. 24 illustrates a fourth embodiment. The features of all of the embodiments may be combined to form an additional embodiment of the encasement. All of the embodiments are suitable for use on a mattress or box spring.

In addition to the physical embodiments discussed above, a novel method for installing the encasement on a mattress is illustrated in FIGS. 5-12 while maintaining a bed skirt in place. FIGS. 13-17 illustrate a novel method for rotating a mattress with an encasement. FIG. 17a illustrates a modular component for the encasement which provides additional mattress management capabilities, as discussed below.

Referring first to FIGS. 1, 2 and 2a, a passive encasement in accordance with the present invention is shown and identified with the reference numeral 30. As shown, the encasement includes a top panel 32, a bottom panel 34 and

four side panels. In this embodiment, three of the side panels 36 include a zipper 40 or other conventional attachment means which define an upper side panel portion 42 and a lower side panel portion 44. In embodiments in which one or more of the four side panels are zippered together, the un-zippered side panel 38 may be formed as a single piece that connects the upper panel 32 to the lower panel 34 on one side.

Alternatively, only one side panel of the encasement may be zippered, as illustrated in FIGS. 1c and 1d. Referring first to FIG. 1c, an embodiment is illustrated in which a short side panel of the encasement is zippered. FIG. 1d illustrates an embodiment in which a long side panel is zippered.

FIGS. 1a and 1b illustrate a second embodiment with an optional feature of the invention. Specifically an optional air valve, such as a conventional plastic air valve 49 with an optional a cap 51 attached thereto with a strap 53 may be integrated into the encasement 30. Specifically, the air valve may be attached anywhere on the encasement 30, for example, the top panel 32 or bottom panel 34 or one of the side panels 36 or 38. The valve 49 facilitates packing the encasement 30 for travel for use on hotel and motel mattresses. The valve 49 allows air to be removed to minimize the space the encasement will take in a suitcase or travel bag. The air may be removed manually or mechanically, for example, by way of a vacuum cleaner.

After the encasement 30 is used on a hotel or motel mattress, it is preferable to zip up the encasement 30, remove the air, as discussed above, and transport the encasement in a zipped up condition until the encasement can be laundered. This is done to prevent mites, bed bugs, allergens, certain microbes, and the like from the hotel or motel mattress from being released in a suitcase or travel bag. A HEPA filter 55 (FIG. 1b) may be fixedly attached to an interior or exterior surface of the encasement, for example, the surface 46, to cover the airway of the valve 49 to prevent bed bugs or dust mites or bacteria or allergens picked up from the hotel or motel mattress from escaping through the air valve 49. Alternatively, the air valve can be omitted and a small aperture formed anywhere on the encasement covered with a HEPA filter may be used.

Referring back to FIGS. 1 and 2, the top panel 32 and bottom panel 34 are generally rectangular in shape and are configured to fit the length and width of standard bed sizes. US standard mattress sizes are provided below in Table 1. It is to be noted that the principles of the invention are also applicable to non-US mattress sizes, as well as non-standard sizes. As will be discussed below, the principles of the invention also apply to mattresses having different depths, even so-called “deep pocket” mattresses.

TABLE 1

US Standard Mattress Sizes		
Common Term	Length × width dimension in inches	Length × width dimension in centimeters
Twin	39 × 75	99 × 190
X-Long Twin	39 × 80	99 × 203
Full	54 × 75	137 × 190
Queen	60 × 80	153 × 203
King	76 × 80	198 × 203
California King	72 × 84	182 × 213

The encasement 30 in accordance with the present invention provides standard protection for a mattress from spills and/or allergens and/or parasites and/or stains but also

provides additional features which relate to the management of the mattress, as discussed below. These features are provided by the novel construction of the encasement 30.

More particularly, the bottom panel 34 is configured to facilitate various mattress management features without compromising the ability of the encasement 30 to provide protection from spills and/or allergens and/or parasites and/or stains. Specifically, the bottom panel 34 includes an interior surface 46 and an exterior surface 48. The interior surface 46 is formed with a slick surface while the exterior surface 48 is formed with a non-slick surface.

Various materials described below can be used for the bottom panel 34 having a slick interior surface 46 and a non-slick exterior surface 48. All of the materials used for the encasement 30 may be launderable. As used herein, the terms "slick" and "non-slick" refer to their respective relative co-efficient of friction. In other words, the present invention contemplates materials in which the "slick" surface has a relatively lower co-efficient of friction than the "non-slick" surface. Exemplary materials are provided below. As used herein, the materials and or coatings may be formed as a single layer or multiple layers.

The non-slick exterior surface 48 can be created on one side of a slick material by way of a coating or sewing or fusing a non-slick backing to one side of the non-slick material. Various conventionally available materials are suitable for the bottom panel 34 having a slick interior surface 46 on one side and a non-slick exterior surface 48 on an opposing side. For example, 70 Denier Heat Sealable (back-side) 100% Nylon Rip Stop material is suitable for use for the bottom panel 34. Other materials with similar coefficients of friction with a coating on one side, for example, urethane, silicone, or coated or bonded or sewn or fused thermal plastic or heat sealable coatings are also suitable.

Such nylon or polyester rip stop material is known to come in widths of 32-104" inches wide and weigh about 0.9 to 4.4 ounces per square yard. Such material can easily be pieced together to accommodate various mattress widths if necessary. Nylon or polyester rip stop material suitable for use with the present invention is available from various sources, such as, Quest Outfitters of Sarasota, Fla. (<http://questoutfitters.com>). Nylon taffeta material is also suitable and is described in detail at http://questoutfitters.com/coated.html#HEAT_SEALABLE, hereby incorporated by reference. Suitable nylon or polyester taffeta material is also available from Rockywoods in Loveland, Colo. (<http://www.rockywoods.com>). Their nylon taffeta material is described in detail at <http://www.rockywoods.com/Fabrics-Hardware-Patterns-Kits/Medium-Weight-Nylon-Fabrics/Heat-Sealable-70-Denier-Nylon-Taffeta>, hereby incorporated by reference.

Non-woven materials may also be used for the bottom panel 34 having a slick interior surface 46 and a non-slick exterior surface 48. For example, Tyvek® polyethylene non-woven fabric, as manufactured by the DuPont Corporation and described in detail at http://www2.dupont.com/Products_and_Services/en_VN/nwn.html may be used. Other materials having two slick sides can also be used, such as, silicone impregnated nylon rip stop, for example, as available from Seattle Fabrics, Inc., <http://www.seattlefabrics.com/nylons.html>. Other materials can also be used with a coating applied to one side. Moreover, different materials can be used for each cover in an application.

Various other materials with a slick side and a non-slick side are also suitable for the bottom panel 34. For example, the following exemplary materials may be used:

warp-knit fabric with a polyurethane laminate coating or a silicone coating.
 a non-woven material with a polyurethane laminate coating or a silicone coating.
 5 Tricot fabric with a polyurethane backing or a silicone coating.
 neoprene fabric with a polyurethane backing or a silicone coating.
 ballistic nylon or polyester fabric with polyurethane backing or a silicone coating.
 10 polyester knit fabric with a polyurethane backing or a silicone coating.
 cotton/polyester terry fabric with a polyurethane backing or a silicone coating.
 15 jacquard knit fabric with a polyurethane backing or a silicone coating.
 coral fleece fabric with a polyurethane backing or a silicone coating.
 microfiber/polyester knit with polyurethane backing or a silicone coating.
 20 a stitch bond fabric with a polyurethane laminate coating or a silicone coating.
 nylon or polyester rip stop with a silicone coating on one side and a polyurethane coating on the other side
 25 typical plastic sheeting with nylon or polyester rip stop with a silicone coating on one side and a polyurethane coating on the other side
 woven or non-woven fiberglass fabric with a silicone coating on one side and a polyurethane coating on the other side
 30 a stitch bond fabric, available from Tietex, item no 944164, style no. C243, wherein the fabric is 32% rayon, 22% polyester, 6% twaron and 40% coat.
 calendared nylon or polyester rip stop with a silicone coating on one side and a polyurethane coating on the other side
 35 calendared nylon or polyester taffeta with a silicone coating on one side and a polyurethane coating on the other side
 calendared suitable fabric with a silicone coating on one side and a polyurethane coating on the other side
 Materials having a similar co-efficient of friction and porosity characteristics may also be used. All such materials are considered to be within the broad scope of the invention.
 45 The following textile materials may also be used for the various surfaces discussed above. These textile materials can be used uncoated, coated, layered, bonded, laminated, embossed, impregnated, backed, or etched on one or both sides as indicated below to control the co-efficient of friction to create a slick surface or a non-slick surface relative to the co-efficient of friction on the opposite side.
 70 DENIER×70 DENIER NYLON RIPSTOP
 70 DENIER×70 DENIER POLYESTER RIPSTOP
 70 DENIER NYLON & POLYESTER BLEND
 55 70 DENIER NYLON TAFFETA
 70 DENIER POLYESTER TAFFETA
 30 DENIER POLYESTER OR NYLON RIPSTOP OR TAFFETA
 210 DENIER OXFORD NYLON
 60 210 DENIER OXFORD POLYESTER
 210 DENIER NYLON & POLYESTER BLEND
 NEOPRENE
 BALLISTIC NYLON OR POLYESTER OR POLYESTER BLEND
 65 WARP-KNIT FABRIC
 POLYVINYL CHLORIDE (PVC)
 POLYETHELENE SHEETING

POLYPROPYLENE SHEETING
 NON-WOVEN FABRIC
 OLEFIN
 POLYOLEFIN
 POLYETHYLENE (PE, LLDPE, HDPE)
 POLYPROPYLENE
 STITCH-BOND FABRIC
 COTTON BLEND
 TERRY MATERIAL
 TRICOT
 NYLON COATED MATERIAL
 POLYESTER COATED MATERIAL
 PRESSURE SENSITIVE BACKED MATERIAL
 LAMINATED MATERIAL
 HIGH DENSITY & MOLECULAR WEIGHT
 POLYETHYLENE FILM

POLYETHYLENE VINYL ACETATE
 The following materials may be coated, laminated, bonded, impregnated, embossed, fused, layered between, or backed onto a side of the textile material(s) to provide a relatively high co-efficient of friction and thus may be used to provide a relatively non-slick surface, relative to the opposite side.

POLYURETHANE
 POLYVINYL CHLORIDE (PVC)
 POLYETHYLENE VINYL ACETATE
 THERMO PLASTIC
 RUBBER
 HEAT SEALABLE
 WATER REPELENT
 ACRYLIC
 ADHESIVE
 RAISED NUBS or PATTERN
 BLENDED COATING OF ANY OF THE ABOVE
 UNCOATED or utilizing the inherently low friction coefficient of an uncoated fabric

FOAM coated/laminated/bonded/impregnated/backing
 SILICONE coated/laminated/bonded/impregnated/backing
 BLENDED POLYMER coated/laminated/bonded/impregnated/backing

NYLON coated/laminated/bonded/impregnated/backing
 POLYESTER coating coated/laminated/bonded/impregnated/backing
 THERMOPLASTICS ELASTOMER (TPE) coated/laminated/bonded/impregnated/backing

The following materials may be coated, laminated, bonded, impregnated, embossed, fused, layered between, or backed onto a side of the textile material(s) to provide a relatively low co-efficient of friction and thus may be used to provide a relatively slick surface, relative to the opposite side.

SILICONE
 TEFLON
 PETROLEUM BASE
 POLYURETHANE
 DIRT WEAR RESISTENT
 HEAT SEALABLE
 BLENDED COATING OF ANY OF THE ABOVE
 SLICK FIBER WOVEN INTO FABRIC
 UNCOATED with an inherently low friction coefficient
 BLENDED POLYMERS
 NYLON
 POLYESTER
 THERMOPLASTIC ELASTOMER
 POLYETHYLENE VINYL ACETATE

The top panel **32** is formed with an interior surface **52** and an exterior surface **50**. The interior surface **52** may be formed with a waterproof coating or membrane, for example, polyurethane or other conventional waterproof coating. The exterior surface **50** may be formed from cotton or other common encasement material or a material commonly used for mattress protectors, as well as conventional bedding or lauderable fabric, such as polyester or a polyester-cotton. The waterproof membrane may be coated on one side of the upper panel **32**.

Various other materials can be used which are waterproof and/or spill proof and/or, moisture proof and/or anti-bacterial and/or anti-allergen and/or anti-dust mite and/or bed bug proof. For example, a bamboo knit fabric with a TPU or PU lamination. Bamboo is naturally occurring anti-bacterial material. The TPU or PU lamination provides waterproofing and anti-allergen, anti-dust-mite, and anti-bed bug protection. Other fabrics with a nano-silver finish with a TPU or PU coating. The nano-silver finish is a non-allergic material. These materials can be used alone or in combination with other materials disclosed herein.

Various configurations for the side panels **36** and **38** are contemplated. For example, the side panels **36** and **38** may be formed from the same material as the bottom panel **34** or the top panel **32** or alternatively from other conventional materials, for providing stain and/or allergen and/or parasite protection. The side panel **38** may be integrally formed with either the top panel **32** or the bottom panel **34**. The split side panels **36** define upper and lower side panel portions **42** and **44**, respectively, and may be formed from the same material as the bottom panel **34** or top panel **32**.

The upper and lower side panel portions **42** and **44**, respectively, may be permanently attached to the upper panel **32** and lower panel **34**, respectively, by permanent conventional and/or non-conventional means, such as by sewing and/or RF welding and/or heat sealing and/or dielectric sealing and/or welding and/or ultrasonic sealing and/or heat sealing and/or bonding and/or utilizing adhesive and/or weaving and/or may be formed as part of the upper and lower panels **32** and **34**. Moreover, the upper and lower side panel portions **42** and **44**, respectively, may be formed as a continuous strip serving all three side panels **36**. The zipper **40** may be attached to the upper portion **42** and the lower portion **44** of the side panels **36** by permanent conventional means, such as, sewing and/or RF welding and/or heat sealing and/or dielectric sealing and/or welding and/or ultrasonic sealing and/or heat sealing and/or bonding and/or utilizing adhesive and/or weaving.

In order to facilitate installation of the encasement on a mattress or foundation, a zipper **40** is provided from corner to corner on each of the zippered side panels **36**. The zipper **40** may be a conventional zipper that extends from one corner **54** on one side to the corner **56** on the third side, for example. The zipper **40** may be attached to the upper portion **42** and the lower portion **44** of the side panels **36** by permanent conventional and/or non-conventional means, such as by sewing and/or RF welding and/or heat sealing and/or dielectric sealing and/or welding and/or ultrasonic sealing and/or heat sealing and/or bonding and/or utilizing adhesive and/or or weaving. As will be discussed in more detail below, the configuration of the zipper **40** facilitates installation of the encasement and also facilitates rotation of the mattress **58**.

FIGS. **17h** and **17i** illustrate an alternate embodiment of the encasement **30**, illustrated in FIG. **1**. In this embodiment, the encasement is configured to reduce the need for coatings on the material. Referring to FIG. **17h**, an encasement **230**

is illustrated. The encasement 230 is similar to the encasement 30 (FIG. 1) and may be used with a separate cover, such as the cover 66 (FIG. 17a) or the cover 201 (FIGS. 17g-17i).

This embodiment includes a top cover 232, side covers 236 and a zipper 240, as well as a bottom panel 247. Except for the bottom panel 247, the encasement 230 is similar to the encasement 30, illustrated in FIG. 1. In this embodiment, the bottom panel 247 may be formed from a homogeneous material with no coatings in which both sides are slick. Alternatively, the rectangular panel 203 can include a slick or non-slick coating on one side or be made from a slick or non-slick material. As shown best in FIG. 17h, the side panels 236 are formed to be extended so that the extensions 249 can be folded down over to overlap the underside of the bottom cover 247 and attached thereto by stitching or other permanent conventional means. In this embodiment, the side panels 236 are formed from a non-slick material, and may reduce the need to provide any coatings on the bottom panel 247. Similarly, the side panels 236 may be made from another homogeneous material with no coatings in which both sides are non-slick. Alternatively, the side panels 236 can include non-slick coatings and may be made from slick or non-slick material.

FIG. 2 illustrates a mattress 58 covered by an encasement 30, supported by a foundation 60. As shown, the zipper 40 is partially unzipped. FIG. 2a illustrates the zipper extending to the corner 56 of the encasement 30, for example.

FIGS. 3 and 4 illustrate a mattress covered by an encasement 30, shown removed from a foundation 60. FIG. 3 illustrates an application in which does not include a bed skirt 62. FIG. 4 is similar to FIG. 3 but illustrates a bed skirt 62 covering the foundation 60. As will be discussed in detail below, the mattress management features provided by the encasement 30 in accordance with the present invention work equally well whether or not a bed skirt 62 is provided on the foundation 60.

In accordance with one aspect of the invention, FIGS. 5-12 illustrate the installation of a bed skirt over a foundation and installation of an encasement 30 over a mattress 58 supported by a foundation 60. Unlike known encasements, installation and removal of the encasement 30 does not require extensive lifting of the mattress 58, as discussed above. In addition to facilitating installation and removal of the encasement over a mattress 58, the encasement 30 provides various mattress management features, such as:

Holding a bed skirt 62 in place while the encasement 30 is being installed on the mattress 58.

Holding a bed skirt 62 in place while the mattress 58 is being rotated.

Enabling the mattress 58 to be more easily rotated without lifting the mattress 58.

Enabling the mattress 58 to be easily installed or removed to change and/or launder the bed skirt or the encasement.

Turning first to FIG. 5, the mattress 58 is slid off the foundation 60 and stood on one end, as illustrated in FIG. 6. If desired, a bed skirt 62 may be installed or removed over the foundation 60, as illustrated in FIG. 7. An important aspect of the encasement 30 is that it will hold the optional bed skirt 62 in place while the mattress 58 is being installed or removed or rotated on top of the foundation 60, with or without a bed skirt, and also while the mattress 58 is encased in an encasement 30 is rotated, as discussed below. The non-slick exterior surface 48 (FIG. 1) on the bottom panel 34 of the encasement 30 secures the bed skirt 62 in place. More particularly, as illustrated in FIG. 8, the encasement 30 is

completely unzipped and placed on top of the foundation 60 or bed skirt 62, as shown. The encasement 30 is placed on top of the bed skirt 62 with the non-slick exterior 48 of the bottom panel 34 in contact with the bed skirt 62. The top panel 32 of the encasement 30 is draped on the floor on one end of the mattress. As shown in FIG. 8, the bottom portions 42 of the side panels 36 are resting on top of the slick interior surface 46 of the bottom panel 34. In applications without a bed skirt 62, the non-slick outer surface 48 of the bottom panel 34 will be in contact with the foundation 60.

As shown in FIG. 9, the bottom portions 44 of the side panels 36 are folded down to be in contact with the bed skirt 62 or alternatively, the foundation 60. Once the bottom portions 42 of the sides 36 are completely folded down, the mattress 58 is slid in place over the interior surface 46 of the bottom panel 34 of the encasement 30, as illustrated in FIG. 10. The interior surface 46 of the bottom panel 34 is formed with a slick surface to facilitate sliding the mattress 58 into place. The non-slick exterior surface 48 of the bottom panel 34 holds the encasement 30 in place over the bed skirt 62 or foundation 60 while the mattress 58 is being slid in place.

Once the mattress 58 is in place, the top panel 32 of the encasement 30 is placed over the top of the mattress 58, as shown in FIG. 11. The encasement 30 is then zipped up by way of the zipper 40, as shown in FIG. 12.

FIGS. 13-17 illustrate a novel method of mattress management which relates to rotating a mattress 58 with an encasement 30. As mentioned above, mattresses can be relatively heavy and difficult to rotate. Moreover, an encasement 30 covers up the mattress handles making it even more difficult to rotate the mattress. The novel method for rotating a mattress with an encasement overcomes these problems.

Initially, as shown in FIG. 13, the zipper 40 is unzipped around all three side panels 36. Once the zipper 40 is unzipped, the top panel 32 is draped on the floor on one end of the mattress, as shown in FIG. 14. Next, as illustrated in FIG. 15, the lower portions 44 of the side panels 36 are folded down to be in contact with the bed skirt 62 or alternatively the foundation 60 in applications where a bed skirt 62 is not used. Once the lower portions 44 of the side panels 36 are all folded down, the mattress 58 can be rotated in a horizontal plane, for example, 180 degrees, as generally illustrated in FIG. 16. This is done to even out mattress wear and body impressions or indentations. In this application, the mattress handles are exposed to facilitate rotation. The slick interior surface 46 of the bottom panel 34 facilitates rotation while the non-slick exterior surface 48 of the bottom panel 34 holds the bottom panel 34 in place against the bed skirt 62 or alternatively, the foundation 60.

Once the mattress 58 is rotated in place, the top cover 32 is placed over the mattress 58, as shown in FIG. 11. The encasement 30 is then zipped up by way of the zipper 40, as shown in FIG. 17.

In an alternate embodiment, various mattress management features can be accomplished can also be accomplished with a modular component; namely a cover 66, for example, as illustrated in FIG. 17a-17d. The cover 66 may include a rectangular panel 68 and four side panels, generally identified with the reference numeral 70. The cover 66 may be configured with the same length and width dimensions as the encasement 30. One side 67 of the cover 66 is provided with a slick surface and an opposing side 69 of the cover 66 is provided with a non-slick surface. The side panels 70 may be formed from a stretchable material to enable the cover 66 to be held in place over a foundation 60 and optionally a bed skirt 62 or optionally a mattress 58 with an encasement. Alternatively, the cover 66 may be formed

without side panels. A suitable cover is described in detail in US Patent Application Publication No. US 2013/0019411 A1, hereby incorporated by reference.

An alternate embodiment of the cover **66** is illustrated in FIGS. **17e**, **17f** and **17g** and identified with the reference numeral **201**. In this embodiment, the cover **201** includes a rectangular panel **203** and four (4) side panels **206**. As shown best in FIG. **17e**, the side panels **206** are extended and are folded over so as to overlap the underside of the rectangular panel **203**. In this embodiment, the rectangular panel **203** may be made from a homogeneous material with no coatings in which both sides are slick. Alternatively, the rectangular panel **203** can include a slick or non-slick coating on one side or be made from a slick or non-slick material. Similarly, the side panels **206** may be made from another homogeneous material with no coatings in which both sides are non-slick. Alternatively, the side panels **206** can include or non-slick coatings and may be made from slick or non-slick material. The overlapping side panels **206** are fastened to the underside of the rectangular panel **203** by stitching or other permanent conventional means. By eliminating fabric coatings, the cover **201** can be made much less expensively than the cover **66**. Alternatively, the cover **66** (FIG. **17a**) as well as the cover **201** (FIGS. **17e-17g**) may be attached to the encasement **30** (FIG. **1**) by way of conventional or non-conventional fasteners, or not attached. The covers **66** and **201** may be attached by way of conventional means, such as Velcro, hook and loop, straps and/or buckle, buttons, snaps, zippers or other conventional fasteners as illustrated in FIGS. **18a**, **19a**, **20a**, **21a**, **22a**, **23a**, **24**, and **25**.

As used herein, the terms “attach” or “attached” means the side panels of the cover **66** (FIG. **17a**), **201** (FIGS. **17e-17g**) are juxtaposed over the sides of the encasement **30** or foundation **60** or bed skirt **62**. Alternatively, “attach” or “attached” means attached by way of conventional fasteners, for example, as described herein.

In this application, in a normal mode of operation, as illustrated in FIG. **17b**, the cover **66** is attached over the encasement **30** and over the zipper **40** so that the non-slick surface **69** of the cover **66** is in contact with the bed skirt **62** or foundation **60** and the slick surface **67** of the cover **66** is in contact with the encasement **30**. In this mode of operation, the side panels **70** of the cover **66** may be configured to hide the zipper **40** on the encasement **30**. Since the non-slick surface **69** of the cover **66** is in contact with the foundation **60** or bed skirt **62**, the mattress **58** will not rotate.

In order to rotate the mattress **58** without removing the encasement **30**, the cover **66** or the alternate cover consisting of a bottom panel with no side panels is detached, if attached, from the mattress **58** and encasement **30** and attached or juxtaposed over the bed skirt **66** or foundation **60** defining a rotate mode of operation. In this mode of operation, the non-slick surface **69** of the cover **66** will be in contact with the foundation **60** or bed skirt **62**. The slick surface **67** of the cover **66** will be in contact with the exterior surface **48** of the bottom panel **34** of the encasement **30**, as shown in FIGS. **17c** and **17d**. Even though the slick surface **67** of the cover **66** is in contact with the exterior surface **48** of the bottom panel **34**, the slick surface **67** of the cover **66** will allow the mattress **58** to rotate while the non-slick surface **69** of the cover **66** holds the bed skirt **62** in place over the foundation **60**. The mattress **58** can then be rotated 180 degrees, for example, in a horizontal plane, as illustrated in FIG. **16**, without removing the encasement **30** from the mattress **58** while holding the bed skirt **62** in place. After the

mattress **58** is rotated, the cover **66** may be re-attached to the encasement **30**, which is over the underside of the mattress.

In embodiments, as illustrated in FIGS. **17e-17g**, the side panel extensions **207** (FIG. **37a**) may be formed from a slick material or material with a slick coating to facilitate tucking the sheets between the mattress **58** and a foundation **60** or platform. Alternatively, the side panel extensions **207** may be formed from a non-slick material or coated with a non-slick coating one or both sides. As mentioned above, although the length and width dimensions of mattresses are standard, the depth dimensions vary considerably. In order to reduce the number of encasements that need to be manufactured, encasements are known to be manufactured to accommodate several depths for each mattress standard length and width size. A few commonly available encasements have depth ranges as set forth below.

6-9" depth
7-12" depth
9-12" depth
11-18" depth

Unfortunately, depending on the actual mattress depth, such encasements do not provide a snug fit. For example, a 6 inch depth mattress will not fit very snug in an encasement made to fit mattresses 6 to 9 inches thick.

In order to provide a snug fit for encasements relative to the depth of mattresses and foundations, exemplary optional adjustable straps **72-82** are illustrated in FIGS. **18a-23a**, respectively. Other adjustable straps are suitable. These adjustable straps are connected between the upper portion **42** and the lower portion **44** of the side panels **36**, as shown in FIGS. **18b-23b**. The straps **72-82** may also be provided on the fixed side or un-zippered side panel **38** (FIG. **1**) to allow the encasement **30** to be snugged up against the mattress. The side panels **36** and **38** may be pleated to allow the excess portions to be neatly folded. The straps **72-82** may also be used to attach and snug the cover **66** (FIG. **17a**) to the encasement **30**.

The straps illustrated in FIGS. **18a-23a** may be incorporated with conventional and non-conventional encasements or alternatively in combination with the novel encasement **30** illustrated in FIG. **1** and described herein. All of such embodiments are contemplated by the present invention.

FIG. **24** illustrates optional horizontal straps, generally identified with the reference numeral **86**. These horizontal straps **86** can be used to snug the encasement **30** with respect to the mattress **58** in a horizontal direction. The straps **86** may be disposed below the zipper **40**. As shown, Velcro® cinch type straps may be provided. Other means are contemplated for tightening the encasement **30** relative to the mattress **58**. For example, the straps **72-82**, discussed above, as well as buttonholes and buttons, or other conventional means may be used. It is also contemplated that combinations of vertical and horizontal straps can be used.

FIG. **25** illustrates an alternate embodiment of the horizontal adjustment devices **86** in FIG. **24**. In this embodiment, a ring **88** is provided to enable the strap **86** to be looped there through and tightened. Both embodiments, illustrated in FIGS. **24** and **25** may be used as horizontal adjustment devices, as shown, and/or vertical adjustment devices.

In accordance with another aspect of the invention, the encasement **30** (FIG. **1**) can be configured so that a bottom portion of the encasement **30** is standard for all encasement depths. In this embodiment, a top portion of the encasement **30** is formed to accommodate various encasement depths. In such an embodiment, the encasement **30** is zippered on all four sides. The top portion includes the top panel **32** and the

15

upper portions 42 of all four side panels 36. The bottom portion includes the bottom panel 34 and the lower portions 44 of all four side panels 36. In this embodiment, the transverse length (normal to the longitudinal length) of the upper portion 42 and the lower portion 44 of the side panels are not equal. The transverse length of the lower portion 44 of the side panel 36 may be set to a standard value. In order to accommodate encasements of different depths, the transverse length of the upper portions 42 of the side panels may vary as function of the overall depth of the encasement.

For example, a bottom portion of the encasement with a transverse length of 4 inches may be used with 8 inch and 10 inch encasements. For an mattress encasement with an 8 inch depth, an upper portion 42 with a 4 inch transverse length is used along with the 4 inch lower portion 44. For a 10-inch encasement, an upper portion 42 with a 6-inch transverse length is used along with the 4 in lower portion 44. Thus, the bottom portion of the encasement 30 may be standardized for different encasement depths.

Obviously, many modifications and variations of the present invention are possible in light of the above teachings. For example, materials for the covers and slick surfaces other than those mentioned above can be which have similar co-efficient of friction characteristics. Thus, it is to be understood that, within the scope of the appended claims, the invention may be practiced otherwise than as specifically described above.

I claim:

1. An encasement for a mattress or foundation comprising:

a top panel defining an exterior surface and an interior surface;

a bottom panel having an interior surface and a non-slick exterior surface, said interior surface of said bottom panel formed at least in part with a slick surface relative to said non-slick exterior surface of said bottom panel to facilitate movement of said mattress with respect to said bottom panel, said non-slick surface being substantially coextensive with said exterior surface of said bottom panel;

a plurality of side panels forming an encasement with said top panel and said bottom panel, said plurality of side panels including at least one separable side panel, said at least one separable side panel defining a separable upper portion and a separable lower portion, said separable upper portion attached to said top panel and said separable lower portion connected to said bottom panel; and

a zipper for attaching said separable upper portion to said separable lower portion of said one or more separable

16

side panels in a normal mode of operation or alternatively at least partially detaching said separable upper side panel portion from said separable lower side panel portion of said one or more separable side panels in an alternate mode of operation to enable at least a portion of said top panel to be at least partially removed from said mattress or foundation to enable movement of said mattress or foundation with respect to said slick surface on said interior surface of said bottom panel.

2. The encasement as recited in claim 1, wherein said top panel, bottom panel and at least one of said plurality of side panels are made from a launderable material.

3. The encasement as recited in claim 1, wherein said top panel, bottom panel and at least one of said side panels are made from encasement material or a material commonly used for mattress protectors, as well as conventional bedding material.

4. The encasement as recited in claim 1, wherein said exterior surface of said top panel is made from a launderable material and said interior surface is formed from a water-proof material.

5. The encasement as recited in claim 1, wherein said separable upper portion and said separable lower portion of said at least one separable side panel are formed as continuous strips.

6. An encasement for a mattress or foundation comprising:

a top panel defining an exterior surface and an interior surface;

a bottom panel having an interior surface and a non-slick exterior surface, said interior surface of said bottom panel formed at least in part with a slick surface relative to said non-slick exterior surface of said bottom panel to facilitate movement of said mattress with respect to said bottom panel, said non-slick surface being substantially coextensive with said exterior surface of said bottom panel;

four side panels forming an encasement with said top panel and said bottom panel, said four side panels formed as four separable side panels, each separable side panel defining a separable upper portion and a separable lower portion, said separable upper portions connected to said top panel and said separable lower portions connected to said bottom panel; and

a zipper for attaching and detaching said separable upper portions relative to said separable lower portions of all of said four side panels to enable the top and separable upper portions to be removed from the encasement on all four sides.

* * * * *